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THE PATH TO VICTORY: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF MENA

REGION COUNTRIES

by

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ABSTRACT

THE PATH TO VICTORY: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF MENA
REGION COUNTRIES

Negar Moayed
Old Dominion University, 2020
Director: Dr. Peter Schulman

During the "Arab Spring" the Arab world witnessed a wave of uprisings. As a result of

these anti-government movements, four governments of Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, and Yemen were

overthrown, three governments of Bahrain, Jordan, and to some points Saudi Arabia were faced

with critical difficulties, and one government ,Syria, experienced domestic war. All these

happened while some other Middle Eastern countries remained stable. Yet, the remaining

questions are: how did these protests emerge? How was the collective identity which is essential

for the social movements created? Why were some of these movements successful in

overthrowing the regime while the others failed? What factors were involved in the success or

failure of these social movements? In order to answer these questions this study reviews the

mainstream theories of social movements to examine whether any of these theories are

applicable to the case of MENA and whether they can explain the reason behind the formation of

movements. This research argues that the traditional theories of social movements fall short in

explaining the chaos in the MENA region as well as the reasons behind the formation of

uprisings. Accordingly, by in depth analysis of three case studies of Tunisia, Egypt, and Bahrain

and through comparing different involved countries in the Arab Spring, this study introduces

four existing challenges in the MENA region. Later by defining relevant sub-categories for each

challenge, institutional factors, facilitators, and determiners are recognized. Finally, by defining a

model, this study claims that the first three challenges, secularism/Islamism, economic, and

ethnic/tribal division are the reason behind the formation of social movements of MENA and the last challenge, administrative, sheds light on the variation of outcome of the movements in this region

This dissertation is dedicated to the memory of Dr. Steve Yetiv, who was my mentor and main reason behind the initiation of the idea of this whole study. The memory of him will forever be with us.

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Most importantly, I am so appreciative of the support and love of my family and my husband through this process. Without their support this process would have been far more arduous. In closing I would like to thank all those who have contributed to my success in taking this journey.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The timeline between 2010 and 2014 was equal to the emergence of many protests in thousands of cities around the world. There have been some movements and protests in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) which led to the transformation in countries like Tunisia and Egypt and some others could not achieve their main demands like in Bahrain, Yemen, and Libya. There has been a long and difficult history of the struggles of the Arab-majority countries regarding a more responsive and involved governance. However, the mutual point in all of them was pushing back the citizen's demands, sometimes even with brutality. Eventually, despite all the fears and obstacles, dissatisfaction of the people with the governments, reached a point where people started to occupy the streets and shout for change.

While the demands were not the same, thousands of people occupied the streets to call for political change in their countries. Some protests were against the denationalization of public services, some demanded higher budgets on social services, and less taxation, while in the majority of the movements in the MENA region the main demand was a complete transformation of the country's political system and democracy.

Soon after, the social movements in MENA have become so popular among the politicians and analysts both domestically and internationally. Moreover, the so-called Arab Spring's domino effect had some long-term impacts on the MENA countries. The active presence or electoral success of Islamic extremism in some of these countries (e.g., Syria and Libya) has made some politicians much worried about the political perspective of the region that they even often reference these movements as the "Arab Winter" instead of the "Arab Spring".

The importance of this topic has resulted from the fact that after the Islamic Revolution of Iran in 1979, the MENA region had not experienced any mass protests until the emergence of the Arab Spring and the Green movement in Iran. Further, even picturing any dramatic political and social transformations were hard and far-reaching for the people of the region and the foreign observers. However, with the emergence of these movements, all the previous assumptions collapsed [1].

After the Islamic Revolution of Iran in 1979, the Arab Spring and the Green Movement were the main anti-government protests and rebellions that spread across the Middle East in late 2010. The Green Movement, which was one of the important contemporary movements in the Middle East, happened in Iran because of the fraudulent presidential election in 2009. In the beginning, Iranian people's main concern in the protests was the outcome of the election. Later, the nature of the movement, slogans, and demands changed dramatically. People were no more concerned only about their votes but called for a reformation. The regime started to confront the crowd, the military got involved and the government started to use force and suppression. Many people died, and two main candidates along many activists, journalists, and protesters got imprisoned [2].

Most of the scholars in the field believe that the main demand of the contemporary movements in MENA is democracy. This variable is common among all the protest movements from Egypt and Tunisia to Yemen and Bahrain. Accordingly, this demand is what differentiates these movements from the 20th century movements. The 20th century movements were mostly

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[1] Kurzman, C. (2012). The Arab spring: Ideals of the Iranian green movement, methods of the Iranian revolution. *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, *44*(1), 162-165.

[2] Rabiei, Kamran. "Protest and Regime Change: Different Experiences of the Arab Uprisings and the 2009 Iranian Presidential Election Protests." *International Studies* 57, no. 2 (2020): 144-170.

related to Nationalism, Marxism, or had religious roots. None of these movements called for democracy as their first demand. However, this is the main feature of the contemporary movements in MENA.[3].

For instance, while the Green Movement at the beginning emerged because of the fraudulent election and was against the official announced result, later it demanded political, social, economic, and technological reformations. People started to demand reformation of the current status quo and moving towards a more pleasant situation with emphasizing a free, fair, and healthy election. The Green Movement was not just an electoral movement but a contentious movement against the lies, deceptions, inefficiencies, and authoritarianism backed into the regime. Based on the formal calculations and power's definition, the Green Movement was a failed social movement. However, it is possible to argue that the Green Movement has not been a failure, because it has been remained and sustained itself in other lively and dynamic forms [4]. Although many scholars believe that these movements have failed, it looks like that MENA social movements appear different from the classic social movements in the US and Europe.

Ten years have passed from the emergence of the Green Movement, the social, contentious movement that emerged during the 2009 presidential elections and formed a coup. Its leaders are still imprisoned and the administration despite all the protests and objections which took a long time to process, remained on till the end of the legal period. Although the Arab spring or the Green Movement might not be successful in achieving their demands, they have initiated shaping a new era of political change. Therefore, in a world where social

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[3] Elseewi, T. A. (2011). The Arab Spring| A Revolution of the Imagination. *International Journal of Communication*, *5*, 10.

[4] Kurzman, C. (2012). The Arab Spring: Ideals of the Iranian Green Movement, methods of the Iranian Revolution. *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, *44*(1), 162-165.

movements have been and continued to be important drivers of political change, it is necessary to have a more thorough understanding of the political outcomes and consequences of the social movements [5].

This dissertation is motivated by two research questions. what is the reason behind the emergence of these contemporary movements and how these protests emerged? What factors were involved in creation of various outcomes and the success or failure of these social movements? For answering these questions, I study the mainstream theories of social movements to see whether any of the classic and new social movements theories are applicable to the social movements of MENA?

The literature regarding the questions about "how" and "why" social movements emerge is so rich. However, the political outcomes of the social movements are what the scholars have begun to study in the past two decades. The point is, it is not easy to examine whether the political outcome is the result of the particular social movement or of other factors within a specific context, during a particular time frame have caused that outcome. Accordingly, the political outcome would not be the same in any states with different political system, context, and another time frame What is obvious is that social movements would provide the population with valuable experiences even if they might not achieve the exact demand at the time.

Demands for democracy, lack of economic development, lack of social justice, bad governance, political repression, social class division, youth and women status, and social media are all variables that were involved in the emergence of movements in MENA [6]. However, the

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[5] Tilly, C. (2017). From mobilization to revolution. In *Collective Violence, Contentious Politics, and Social Change* (pp. 71-91). Routledge.

[6] Bakshian, Aram. "Eyes and Ears of the Arab Spring." (2012): 85-90.

level of their impact and the way that governments react to these movements and protests, and

the form of dispute were not similar in the studied countries in MENA[7].

I begin the dissertation by reviewing the mainstream theories of social movements and

new social movement theories which I believe is necessary in order to have a broader perspective

regarding the social movements of MENA. In chapter 2, by applying these theories to the case of

MENA I discuss the incapability of the traditional and new social movement theories in

explaining the dynamics of contemporary social movements in MENA in terms of the

differences in the political context, the magnitude of mobilization potentials, organizational

characteristics, and action orientation.

There is a vast amount of both theoretical and empirical literature on social movements.

There are many scholarly debates on the theories of social movements and the consequences of

social movements. The mainstream theories of social movements are the ones that emerged in

the United States and Europe during the 70-80s. These theories were created to explain the

classical movements like civil rights, national student liberation, and anti-war movements [8].

Each of these movements had an agenda, they were all politically oriented, and moreover,

they all originated to progress towards democracy. For instance, in Europe, the new social

movement theories which emerged because of the student movement of 1968, environmental,

ecological, and feminist movements took a path that was non-class and new in terms of political

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[7] Bosi, Lorenzo, and Katrin Uba. "Introduction: the outcomes of social movement." *Mobilization* 14 (2009): 409-415.

[8] Russell, Adrienne. "The Arab Spring| Extra-National Information Flows, Social Media and the 2011 Egyptian Uprising." *International Journal of Communication* 5 (2011): 10.

and social logic. The new avenue was directed at addressing what was believed to be the absence in classical Marxism, namely a tendency toward economic and class reductionism [9].

The dominant theory used in studying social movements in the United States is Resource Mobilization Theory (RMT), with the focus on economic factors and resources for collective actions. This theory seeks to examine, in the presence of political opportunities, how actors recognize the opportunities and initiate actions [10]. Later, with the development of social movement theories, scholars shift the focus from material resources and humans to the political environment. The best known of these theories is the Political Process Theory (PPT). According to this theory, that provides an opportunity for collective actions is the opening of political opportunities and structural factors, such as factors that are stable and are outside of the control of movement actors [11].

In chapter 3, I review the historical context of the Middle East and explain the nature of MENA movements which is the reason behind the necessity of a new model or theory for explaining the MENA movements. I argue that the factor which prevents formation of real and peaceful social movement in MENA like the rest of the world is lack of democracy. Thus, in chapter 5, I discuss the obstacles to democracy which is the reason behind the difference between the MENA movements and other social movements. In chapter 6, I study three case studies, the successful cased of Tunisia and Egypt along the failed case of Bahrain by help of four main present challenges in the Middle East. By reviewing these challenges, I offer an analytical

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[9] Buechler, S. M. (1995). New social movement theories. *Sociological Quarterly*, *36*(3), 441-464.
[10] Tarrow, S. G. (2011). *Power in movement: Social movements and contentious politics*. Cambridge University Press.

[11] Foran, John, ed. *A century of revolution: social movements in Iran*. Vol. 2. U of Minnesota Press, 1994.

approach in chapter 7, that explains all the impactful factors for formation of social movements in MENA region.

Based on all the impactful variables on the formation of social movements in the region and the present challenges, I suggest a model in chapter 8 which is capable to explain the social movements of MENA. Later, in this chapter I argue that the first three challenges are the reason behind the formation of the social movements in MENA. Accordingly, the fourth challenge and its subcategory which are three factors can help us to define the variation of the outcome, success, or failure of a movement in MENA.

In chapter 9, the conclusion, I endeavor to make several contributions by discussing the various scenarios which the presence or absence of these three variables could cause and answer the key question which this dissertation is motivated by. I argue that the outcomes of social movements in the MENA are not like the consequences of social movements in other countries. Finally, I discuss some of the limitation of this project and potential extension of the project in future studies.

To examine these questions this research endeavors to argue the new wave of social movements is not explainable through the old theories of social movements. Additionally, not all the theories of social movements either old or new are applicable to the region of MENA.

By comparing political outcomes of three case studies, this research will answer these questions and present a model for describing the political outcomes of social movements in MENA. Besides this research aims to argue that the outcomes of social movements in the MENA are not like the consequences of social movements in other countries. Further, we explore answers to the questions by applying a case study approach. In order to analyze the involved factors that impact the outcome of social movements, it will be a comparison among some

contemporary cases that happened in the MENA (The Arab Spring both successful and

unsuccessful cases), to comprehend various social movements inside the Middle East with the

help of the old and new theories of social movements[12].

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[12] Bosi, Lorenzo, and Katrin Uba. "Introduction: the outcome of social movement." Mobilization 14 (2009): 409-415.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW: THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES ON SOCIAL

MOVEMENTS

Before elaborating on the main arguments of this dissertation and discussing it, it is necessary to have a comprehensive understanding of the main definition of contentious politics and realize what contentious politics is about. However, first I must point out the distinction between contentious politics and social movement. Although sometimes these two terms are used interchangeably, they are quite different concepts. Yet first I must define "contentious politics". Tilly and Tarrow (2015)[13], define *contentious politics* as what actors do by using public performances to make claims on authorities. Involved actors in contentious politics by taking advantage of public opportunities would use some forms of collective actions (repertoires) to make the claims on the authorities. The claim could be on any demand which is against other actor's interests or somehow lead to mutual interests or programs which are related to the governments either as the initiators of claims or third parties. Tilly and Tarrow (2015)[14] argue that what makes contentious politics different from social movements is that contentious politics is the point where three features of contention, collective action and politics converge.

Social movements have several basic properties of movements. The contention is about making claims which are somehow standing on other actor's interests. Thus, it could be said that more than one party is involved in contention so that one party works as a subject who is making a claim and the other one as an object who is the receiver of a claim. Yet, the range of claims

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[13] Tarrow, Sidney, and Charles Tilly. *Policy (s) of the conflict. From the strike to the revolution.* Paris: The Paris Institute of Political Studies Press, 2015.

[14] Ibid

could vary from a very decent one to more vociferous demands or even attacks which could be threatening to the object's interests. So, the main components of the contention are subjects, objects, and claims. (Johnston, 1995)[15]

Figure 1. Contentious Politics: The Interaction Among Contention, Collective Action, and Politics
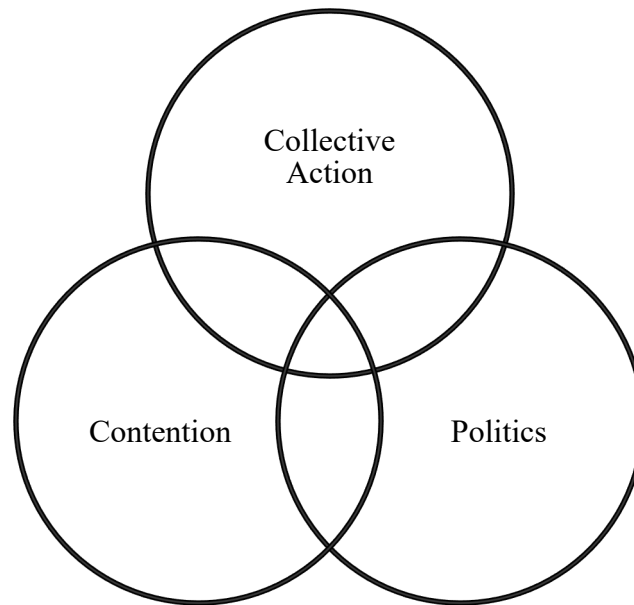
Collective action refers to any non-institutionalized harmonious endeavors in the direction of shared interests. Collective actions could occur both outside and inside the political environment or even without any contention [16].

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[15] Johnston, Hank, and Bert Klandermans. "The cultural analysis of social movements." *Social movements and culture* 4 (1995): 3-24.

[16] McAdam, Doug, and Yang Su. "The war at home: Antiwar protests and congressional voting, 1965 to 1973." *American sociological review* (2002): 696-721.

Until the time that there is no direct interaction with the government or no engagement in activities related to government interests or regulations, the collective action has nothing to do with the political environment. According to Tilly and Tarrow, politics which is the third component of the contentious politics also ranges from simple usual matters to significant topics. However, most likely politics bring little or no contention to the overall situation.

There are four primary types of collective actions: the crowd, the masses, the public, and the social movements. According to Lofland (1993) [17] the crowd refers to a massive number of people in nearness. The masses and the public are quite similar. However, the masses refer to a large group of people with a common interest while the public is an unorganized massive group of people with common ideas.

Although sometimes the term social movement is being used interchangeably with notions of contentious politics, Tarrow and Tilly by providing plenty of evidence argue that expansion of the term social movement for defining all the social movement bases (social background, collective action, organizational resources, etc.) has some downsides. The first drawback is that putting all types of contention under the same category would make an accurate comparison hard. Secondly, by counting all forms of contention as social movements testing transitions among them would be problematic. Lastly, categorizing all contention under the social movement label would make the fact that social movements are not a universal but a vague historical category.

Now the question we must ask is what meets the requirements of a social movement? Each group of scholars has defined "social movement" differently. Some groups defined social movements as an action in which actors of central conflicts in society would lead the direction of

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[17] Lofland, John. *Polite protesters: The American peace movement of the 1980s*. Syracuse University Press, 1993.

the conflict in the exact opposite direction of the historical process by expressing their critical oppositions [18].

While others define social movements as an act which by expressing a specific type of collective action, aims to move beyond the limits of a given system.

Tarrow and Tilly define a social movement as a continuous campaign in which actors by using repeated repertoires make certain claims. According to Sidney Tarrow, what is important about social movements is that they have proceeded as interactive campaigns like electoral or religious and not as solo performances. Accordingly, social movements defined as the relations between groups of claimants and the object of their claims with third parties like authorities, adversaries, and allies while the role of various citizens in clarifying the campaigns is usually significant. (Tilly and Tarrow, 2007.)[19]Yet, Tilly and Tarrow make the point that not all forms of contentious politics are social movements.

Solo performances of public or claimants would not count as a social movement but interactive campaigns. Social movements are a combination of continuous campaigns of claim-making; a collection of public performances such as rallies, demonstrations; constant public displays such as wearing specific colors or displaying signs, chanting slogans which all these social movement bases are built on links and network, organizations and unions. Henceforth, what counts as a social movement is the synthesis of these three elements (Tilly, 2004)[20]. This combination might not be a new concept in Western countries since the emergence of the social

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[18] Touraine, Alain. "The voice and the eye: An analysis of social movements." (1981).

[19] Tarrow, Sidney, and Charles Tilly. "Contentious politics and social movements." In *the Oxford handbook of comparative politics*. 2007.

[20] Tilly, Charles. *Contention and democracy in Europe, 1650-2000*. Cambridge University Press, 2004.

movements in the late eighteenth century, but it was uncommon or even absent in much of the contemporary world especially MENA which is the case of this study.

The important point which should be mentioned is the necessity of another concept other than a combination of the above three elements for emerging of a social movement. That concept is democratization. ***Democratization*** is a factor that could enhance the formation of social movements. Tilly (2004) defines democratization as an enhancement of regimes in providing comprehensive and equal citizenship with protection and creating channels and resources for offering consultations to citizen's demands. Democratic institutions, he continues, could decrease the array of well-known and popular collective actions and limit violent uprisings. Change and variation in some elements could cause different outcomes and consequences for social movements in time and space. The social movements, in time and space, could disappear or morph into another form of politics [21].

The main element which could cause different outcomes is political environments; The character of a social movement in democracy will not be like a social movement in non-democracy. The second element is the interactions that occur within the course of a social movement; for instance, the outcome of a social movement could change dramatically based on an interaction of police guards with demonstrators from a peaceful protest to a violent revolt. Lastly, the communication between the participants in social movements, the citizens, authorities

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[21] Goldstone, Jack Andrew. "Cross-class Coalitions and the Making of the Arab Revolts of 2011." *Swiss Political Science Review* 17, no. 4 (2011): 457.

or any object of claims during the source of social movement could sometimes lead to achieving a great outcome or in contrast could totally mislead the social movement [22][23].

Social movements can occur in three stages of local, national, and global. Moreover, according to Aberle (1966)[24], there are some related classifications and patterns of social movements that are based on their demand and the amount of change they want which could help us to understand them better: reform movements, revolutionary movements, redemptive movements, alternative movements, and resistance movements.

Reform movements advocate for minor changes in the social structure (Anti-nuclear movement). In contrast, *resistance movements* try to prevent or undo any change to social structure (The Ku Klux Klan). On the other hand, *revolutionary movements* seek fundamental and radical changes in every feature of the society (movements of 1979 in Iran against the Shah, Chinese communist movements, Bolsheviks in Russia). *Redemptive movements* usually have a religious nature and seek to arouse ideality, inner change, and spirituality in individuals (New age). Lastly, *alternative movements* aim is self-improvement and creating changes in an individual's beliefs and principles [25].

Now that we studied the definition of the social movement, its preconditions, and various types, in the rest of the chapter, we will review various theories of social movements.

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[22] Chabot, Sean, and Jan Willem Duyvendak. "Globalization and transnational diffusion between social movements: reconceptualizing the dissemination of the Gandhian repertoire and the" coming out' routine." *Theory and Society* 31, no. 6 (2002): 697-740

[23] Scalmer, Sean. "The labor of diffusion: the peace pledge union and the adaptation of the Gandhian repertoire." *Mobilization: An International Quarterly* 7, no. 3 (2002): 269-286.

[24] Aberle, David F. "A Classification of Social Movements." *The Peyote Religion among the Navaho* (1966): 315-33.

[25] Johnston, Hank. *What is a social movement?* John Wiley & Sons, 2014.

Thus, first we are going to review the mainstream theories of the social movements, analyze them and examine the changes in theories of social movements through the time. Later, by analyzing the roots and origins of these theories the aim of this chapter is to establish the theoretical context for this dissertation. To have a broad understanding of the roots and origins of theories of social movements, it is necessary to dig in the scholarly debates and perspectives from the late 1970s to the present and review the real causes and preconditions for the occurrence of the social movements. Lastly, in this chapter we are going to examine whether achieving the demanded outcome in different social and political contexts would be the same. Also we are going to examine whether the theories of social movements would be able to explain MENA region since the existing theories are particularly based on social movements in Northern democracies and their capability for explaining the emergence of social movements and the essential requirements in non-democracies is unclear.

To begin, first we are going to clarify one of the main scholarly debates which questions whether social movements can create structural and political changes or if social movements are the outcomes of political change and not the cause of it [26].

While the answer to this question would be different in different contexts such as democracies or non-democracies, my research supports the scholars who believe social movements are not the outcome but the main drivers of social and political change and playing key roles in transforming autocracy to democracy.[27]

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[26] Earl, Jennifer. "Methods, movements, and outcomes." *Research in Social Movements, Conflicts and Change* 22 (2000): 3-25.

[27] McAdam, Doug, Sidney Tarrow, and Charles Tilly. "Dynamics of contention." Social Movement Studies 2, no. 1 (2003): 99-102.

In this regard, having a comprehensive understanding of the theories of social movements and collective action is beneficial and necessary. With a broad understanding about these theories we would be able to describe and explain social movements and also examine the way such movements form and mobilize, what outcome they try to achieve, what they are mobilizing against, assess policies and strategies regarding the particular outcomes and, also to what extent this mobilization or counter-mobilization could succeed or fail. [28]

All these theories have a background and history and none of them arise or operate in a vacuum. Accordingly, in response to the realities of subject-matter, they have gone through many changes and renovations. However, the point of this dissertation's explaining the background of these theories to highlight the intellectual tools that they provide are not compatible with the task of explaining social movements in MENA.

Theories of social movements have experienced substantial changes since the 1940s, especially in the last couple of years. These changes had a significant impact on socio-historical contexts and on the experiences, which caused the theorists to revise the definition of their subject-matter.

To explain the different types of social movements in different social conditions along with the history behind their formation and their achieved political outcomes, we must study the main leading social movement theories from a historical perspective.

2.1 The Classical Theories of Social Movements

The content of most of the collective action in the 1950s and 1960s contrasted with conventional definitions for political participation. It promoted concepts like peace, freedom and

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[28] Ebaugh, Helen Rose. *The Gülen movement: A sociological analysis of a civic movement rooted in moderate Islam*. Springer Science & Business Media, 2009.

civil rights which all were advocating moving from self-centered ideas towards emancipation. The American theorists took their inspirations from the dominant social movements that happened in the 60s like the American Civil Rights movements, the Anti-War Movement, and the National Student Liberation. While these movements each had specific demands like calling an end to racial segregation in the American civil rights, removal of the US military and troops national student liberation, they all had one thing in common; all were self-consciously oriented and all were perceived as forces for paving the way towards democracy. (Skopol,1979)[29] The contemporary treatment of collective behavior theory and identity builds upon the classical theories and social-psychological grounds.

The key sources for sociological studying of social movements beginning in the 1970s were four mainstream theories: ***Collective behavior theory, resource mobilization theory, framing, and political process theory***. Since many leading social theorists had a Marxist background or were members of student movements of the 60s and 70s, the Marxist theory was one of the impactful theories on the study of collective phenomena [30][31][32][33]. Thus, before examining these four schools of thought we must briefly review theories of Marx, Lenin, Gramsci, and Tilly since they were the initiators of social movement theories and their emphasis

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[29] Skocpol, Theda, and Skocpol Theda. *States and social revolutions: A comparative analysis of France, Russia and China*. Cambridge University Press, 1979.

[30] Snow, David A. "Social movements as challenges to authority: Resistance to an emerging conceptual hegemony." *Research in social movements, conflicts and change* 25, no. 1 (2004): 3-25.

[31] Williams, Rhys H. "The cultural contexts of collective action: Constraints, opportunities, and the symbolic life of social movements." *The Blackwell companion to social movements* (2004): 91-115.

[32] Melucci, Alberto. "The new social movements: A theoretical approach." *Information (International Social Science Council)*19, no. 2 (1980): 199-226.

[33] Della Porta, Donatella, and Mario Diani. *Social movements: An introduction*. John Wiley & Sons, 2020.

on the element of collective action was determinative. Marx and Engels were the initiators of theories of social movements. According to them, individuals will involve in collective actions when their social class is in paradox with its adversaries.

In the ***Marxist theory***, the foundation of collective action is self-awareness of a class of society from their task regarding making a change and reformation. Put differently, they believe that social structure is the foundation of collective action. Thus, as other scholars argue, Marx and Engels instead of studying mechanisms that attract individuals into collective actions just refer to the collective engagement of individuals to society's structural development. They did not consider the role of resources and politics which is needed to engage in collective actions. the problem which has concerned theorists since then was although according to Marx engagement of the individuals in collective actions based on their self-awareness [34].

But what is the reason that some actors despite the presence of objective conditions for revolt sometimes fail to do so? He replied to his critiques with the theory of "false consciousness" which argues that the failure of actors to act at the proper time is due to unawareness caused by their class enemies. Although this argument was not acceptable since scholars believe that examining false or realness of consciousness is not possible [35].

According to social movement theorists, Marx's theory was flawed because it did not consider the role of leadership or even the culture of the working-class. In general, he ignored

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[34] Block, Fred. "The ruling class does not rule: Notes on the Marxist theory of the state." *The political economy: Readings in the poilitics and economics of American public policy* (1984): 32-46.

[35] Jessop, Bob. *Nicos Poulantzas: Marxist Theory and Political Strategy: Marxist theory and political strategy*. Macmillan International Higher Education, 1985.

addressing the role of political conditions which are compulsory for creating proper opportunities for revolutionary mobilization[36].

The main critique of Marxist theory was ***Lenin*** whose major concern was the problem of leadership. His main argument and criticism of Marx's theory was regarding the objective conditions. By referring to the Western European experiences he argues that instead of waiting for objective conditions, it is possible to create an organization with a revolutionary leadership to solve the problem of the working class[37].

Later, Lenin's theory took hold in Russia and the occurrence of the Communist movement at that time weakened Western social democracy. The failure of the Russian Revolution moving towards the West in 1917, was the main argument of ***Gramsci***, a European Marxist that raising a revolution in the West is not possible with vanguard forms of organizations. By criticizing Lenin's theory, he emphasizes on working-class culture. Thus, by revising Lenin's theory he suggests training a team of organic intellectuals to complement traditional ones in the party leadership. He believes in this way by producing a countercultural harmony among workers it is possible to give workers the ability to interact with other social establishments. Yet, he was aware that this task requires the party to learn how to deal with the ups and downs of the middle-class society. This was what caused a new dilemma[38].The problem was Gramsci's theory not only did not have a guideline regarding the ways to fight the battle between the working and middle-class but was just based on the influence of the working-class

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[36] Tarrow, Sidney G. *Power in movement: Social movements and contentious politics*. Cambridge University Press, 2011.

[37] Vanguard forms of organization

[38] Carroll, William K., and Robert S. Ratner. "Between Leninism and radical pluralism: Gramscian reflections on counter-hegemony and the new social movements." *Critical Sociology*20, no. 2 (1994): 3-26.

on bourgeois society and ignored the common sense of middle-class society. Moreover, his theory was flawed since it was without a theory of political mobilization it was not able to distinguish between polities with strong or weak opportunities and limitations [39].

Among the next generation, there was ***Charles Tilly***, influenced by Marxism, who is well known for his ideas related to structural variables in shaping contention, state structure and state strategic imperatives (Tilly, 1986;1990). Later, Tilly introduces his "Polity Model" which studies the interactions among rulers, polity members and outside actors (1977)[40]. Since all the above theories had some shortcomings, beginning the 1970s, contemporary social scientists started to propose solutions to these flaws. With all being said, now we are going to briefly review the four main schools of thought which emerged in social science to examine their contribution to the concept of social movement and contentious politics as of today.

2.2 Collective Behavior Theory

Collective behavior theory as its early version began to form by arguments of theorists such as Le Bon (1985), lofland (1993) and Blumer (1969) is noninstitutionalized activity in which several people voluntarily engage According to this group of scholars, there are four primary forms of collective behavior, the crowd, the mass, the public and social movements. In all these forms of collective behavior people would be engaged voluntarily for a common interest. ***The crowds*** are usually formed by many people. There are four different types of crowd: casual crowds, conventional crowds, expressive crowds, and acting crowds. Casual crowds are a

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[39] Ibid

[40] Tilly, Charles. "From mobilization to revolution." (1977).

group of people that are present in the same place at a same time but do not have any interaction with each other. Conventional crowds same as the previous group are in the same place at the same time but for a planned or scheduled event. The goal of the third type of crowd is expressing emotions. And the focus of the last type of crowd is on a goal or an action.

A mass refers to many people with common interest but incapable of acting together in an organized collaborative way. A public is so like the mass regarding the large number of people who are unrelated and unorganized, but the main difference is while the members of a mass have common interests, the members of a public share ideas. The last category which is social movements was explained in detail before [41]. They viewed members of the crowd as irrational, uncontrolled groups of people who join uprisings or riots since outside the crowd they would not be able to as an anonymous member.

There are three main theories on collective behavior. The first, the emergent-norm perspective, emphasizes the importance of social norms in crowd behavior. The next, the value-added theory, is a functionalist perspective that states that several preconditions must be in place for collective behavior to occur. Finally, the assembling perspective focuses on collective action rather than collective behavior, addressing the processes associated with crowd behavior and the lifecycle and various categories of gatherings.

Accordingly, the classical social movement theorists such as Smelser (1962) builds on earlier collective behavior theorists, that social movements emerge as a result of any severe social strain due to interruption in the normal functioning of society (social change), like industrial development, technologies, and urbanization. Thus, according to Smelser for the

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[41] Burstein, Paul, and Sarah Sausner. "The incidence and impact of policy-oriented collective action: competing views." In *Sociological Forum*, vol. 20, no. 3, pp. 403-419. Kluwer Academic Publishers-Plenum Publishers, 2005.

occurrence of an episode of collective behavior which is the necessity of social movement, at least some sort of strain must be present [42].

However, the mentioned features were related to the earlier version of the collective behavior theory. Later, political scientists revised this theory to create a politically connected view of social movements. In contrast to classic collective behavior theorists, political scientists argue that movements do not occur as a matter of disruption in the normal functioning of society. Social movements are logical happenings and related crowds that have rational behaviors. They treat interest groups as a normal part of the political process since they believe that societies are rarely stable. Moreover, while system strain always presents to some degree, relying on it as the main cause of social movements is problematic. It is possible to argue that strain is a required, but an inadequate prerequisite of social movements [43].

2.3 Political Process Theory (PPT)

Another social movement theory developed by American scholars encouraged by the upsurge of contentious politics in the Civil Rights movement is known as political process theory. Tilly (1978) was the one who started initiating ideas related to preconditions for mobilization such as opportunity/threat to protesters and facilitation/repression by the system. While some American social scientists started focusing on urban politics and linking protests to different measures of local opportunity or even using protest as a political resource, Doug McAdam (1999)[44] by elaborating on Tilly's model and synthesizing all these various approaches,

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[42] Zurcher, Louis A., and David A. Snow. "Collective behavior: Social movements." In *Social psychology*, pp. 447-482. Routledge, 2017.

[43] Wilson, John. 1973. *Introduction to Social Movements.* New York: Basic Books.

[44] Giugni, Marco, Doug McAdam, and Charles Tilly, eds. *How social movements matter.* Vol. 10. U of Minnesota Press, 1999.

developed "political process model. In contrast to the Tilly's model, political process theorists instead of focusing on all features of opportunity/threat and facilitation/repression just tried to emphasis on opportunities to examine different concerns like how movements exploit opportunities or how various political structures would be able to create different degrees of opportunity to uprising groups and lastly study the process of change of opportunities related to a specific movement over time.

According to McAdam, political opportunity can explain the emergence of social movements with the help of various elements. The first one is related to having enough access to the political system which varies based on the degree of the system's openness. The second one is the stability or instability of coalitions and political ranks. The next element is the presence of potential allies and their position. Another factor is related to the conflicts among or inside the elites who facilitate or limit collective action and their tolerance for handling the grievances. The other factor is the ability of the political system to block oppositional movements. The last factor that has been added recently is basically regarding the international/geopolitical forces that can generate the desirable opportunities for the occurrence of a movement.

All the mentioned factors are impactful on protestant behaviors and their formation, the occurrence of the movements and besides the interaction of movements with the political system. PPT theorists emphasize an advancement of a universal theory of social movements which has been predicated upon some structural constant factors that movements actors have no control over them. Put differently, according to PPT what could initiate the mobilization of a mass movement mostly is the presence of the popular political pressure from the state part and the

confluence of the public's awareness of that presence along with the ability and willingness to exploit it[45].

The problem which almost was present in all various political process theorist's works until the 1990s was applicability of the political process models to just democratize the West and nowhere else.

The second problem of the political process until the 1990s was related to undermining the role of repression and threat. And lastly, although the name of the model was political process theory, it did not examine the process of contention and scholars failed to study the correlation of different elements in the model to one another and its related mechanisms.

Moreover, this theory contrasts with RMT because instead of focusing on human and material resources which are available to social movement organizations it focuses on the political environment which SMO's are active in [46].

Since PPT could shape the research agenda of the field, among scholars of social movement it is known as the "hegemonic paradigm". This model assumes political opportunities have the potential to create the required opportunity for collective actions.

2.4 Resource Mobilization Theory (RMT)

Development of the Resource mobilization theory began by criticizing classical theories that argue social movements are arising under social disorganization and injustice conditions.

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[45] Goodwin, Jeff, and James M. Jasper, eds. *The Social Movements Reader: Cases and Concepts*. John Wiley & Sons, 2014.

[46] McAdam, Doug, John D. McCarthy, and Mayer N. Zald, eds. *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements: Political Opportunities, Mobilizing Structures, and Cultural Framings*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

The initiators of this theory, McCarthy and Zald (1973)[47], argue that the cumulative level of strain or dissatisfaction which according to the collective behavior theorists are the causal significance of the social movements are insufficient causes. In contrast, according to the resource mobilization theory, insurgency arises from the increase in the level of essential resources to support collective protest activity, not rise in discontent.

Thus, the key factor in the success of this theory is about the available resources and how to exploit them; e.g. using the existing organization for forming coalitions, forming effective and structured campaigns in response to political pressures, demanding financial support, career benefits and security.

Based on their arguments, generally, resource mobilization theorists disregard ideology or any irrational factor in the study of social movements. In fact, scholars such as McCarthy, Zald, Tilly, and Oberschall believe that social movements are rational, organized, and targeted phenomena that arise by calculating the cost and benefit.

This theory which is known as one of the dominant theories for studying social movements in the United States aims to explain how actors could use the most out of the created opportunities in the political system, either preventive or facilitative. Based on RMT, the role which resources play for oppositional groups before mobilization and how these groups engage these resources is so critical to define how capable they are in making their presence felt and if they can to create any level of change (Jenkins, 1983)[48].

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[47] McCarthy, John D., and N. Mayer. "ZALD (1973) The Trend of Social Movements in America: Professionalization and Resource Mobilization. Morristown."

[48] Jenkins, J. Craig. "Resource Mobilization Theory and the Study of Social Movements." *Annual Review of Sociology* 9, no. 1 (1983): 527-553.

What needs to be mentioned here is that according to the main social movement's theorists, Charles Tilly, John McCarthy, and Mayer Zald, preparation for mobilization to fight with injustice, which is always in the society, needs both resources and rational orientation to action [49]. Put differently, the actions of actors in social movements should not be interpreted as if they are controlled by feelings, emotions, or thoughts, but should be read in terms of opportunities for actions or the logic of costs and benefits. In this theory, what appears as a crucial feature of social mobilization is leadership. Zald and McCarthy emphasis on the key role which this factor could play in recognizing and outlining the complaints and using the opportunities for beginning collective action. As such, structured leadership is the precondition of structured group action.

Additionally, the focus of RMT is on the economic factor or aspects related to money and labor to raise collective actions. In this schema, the occurrence, strength, and impact of a social movement organization (SMO) is significantly correlated with the capacity to collectivize the efficient communications and effective people. As such, RMT is based on this principle that a high level of technical expertise is the requisite of the social change[50].

2.5 Framing Theory

The occurrence of movements with no time for mobilizing resources or the failure of some well-founded groups for attaining actual collective actions, calls into question the significance of resource mobilization theory for explaining the establishment of social

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[49] Melucci, Alberto. "A Strange Kind of Newness: What's 'New'in New Social Movements?." *New Social Movements: From Ideology to Identity* 103 (1994).

[50] Garner, Roberta, and John Tenuto. "Social Movement Theory and Research: An Annotated Guide." (1997).

movements[51]. The concept of the frame was initiated by Goffman (1974)[52] and later found its way to the study of social movements. According to Goffman frames are outlined that let individuals make occurrences in the world meaningful based on the set of beliefs. in other words, frames consist of action-oriented sets of beliefs that could validate happenings and operations related to a social movement organization [53]. Accordingly, the collective action frames would endlessly evolve during the movement meetings and campaigns.

The main purposes of the evolution of frames are to absorb more members, mobilizing the participants, obtaining more resources.

The focus of this theory is interpreting the role of shared expectations and norms held by actors in events and curing the problems. Thus, frame processes attempt to analyze collective actions represented by actors in terms of motivations, beliefs, and discourses. Moreover, it focuses on the process of production and utilization of frames during different phases of a movement along with the impact of ideas, culture, and attitudes on the repertoires of action and contention [54].

Additionally, frame theory mentions the critical roles of ideology, its contradictions, and the consequences it could bring for followers, counter-movements, and the system. Factors such as language, leadership, media, and institutions all have a significant impact on the framing

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[51] Chong, Dennis, and James N. Druckman. "Framing theory." *Annu. Rev. Polit. Sci.* 10 (2007): 103-126.

[52] Goffman, Erving. *Frame Analysis: An Essay on the Organization of Experience*. Harvard University Press, 1974.

[53] Snow, David A., and Robert D. Benford. "Clarifying the relationship between framing and ideology." *Frames of Protest: Social Movements and the Framing Perspective* 205 (2005): 209.

[54] Johnston, Hank, and John A. Noakes, eds. *Frames of Protest: Social Movements and the Framing Perspective*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2005.

process. According to Benford and Snow (2005)[55], successful social movements adhere to three categories of frames for achieving their goals: Diagnostic framing, prognostic framing, and motivational framing.

Diagnostic framing offers a clear solution for a specific demand. The claim of this type of framing is "we believe something is wrong and we know how to fix it". Prognostic framing states the solution for the social movement problem along with the application. Lastly, motivational framing calls for action. This frame is what happens once individuals agree with either diagnostic or prognostic framing.

2.6 New Social Movement Theory

This theory arises in the 1970s, from the classic European social theory and political philosophy with critics on the dominant Marxist theory which looks at social movements as mirroring a major conflict among classes regarding economic production. In other words, the main aim of this theory was explaining the increase of postindustrial, or movements related to the quality of life, which are not explainable by using the classic theories of social movements [56].

In general, new social movements tempt to discuss different features of everyday life or what traditionally is being called outside politics by getting through the traditional class, socioeconomic associations, and political parties. The nature of these movements is more relaxed, diverse, and informal with preference of non-hierarchical methods and irregular political engagement in comparison to the older social movements.

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[55] Snow, David A., and Robert D. Benford. "Clarifying the relationship between framing and ideology." *Frames of protest: Social movements and the framing perspective* 205 (2005): 209.

[56] Klandermans, Bert. "New social movements and resource mobilization: The European and the American approach." *International Journal of Mass Emergencies and Disasters* 4, no. 2 (1986): 13-37.

Since the emergence of the new social movement theories was along with different themes in Europe like the student movement that chose them in 1968, such as feminist and ecological movements and anti-nuclear movements, the new social movement theories selected a direction against the classical Marxism in order to cover both non-class and new social and political logic [57].

The key objective of this theory which was initiated by European theorists like Alberto Melucci (1994)[58] and Allen Touraine was proving the insufficiency of classical Marxism by arguing that the foundation of all the politically significant social action was rooted in capitalism and all other social logics were inferior at best in shaping social action. Accordingly, the main claim of this theory was creating a structural development in Western societies and improving the previous class conflicts.

In fact, the reason behind the emergence of new social movements theory was the appearance of some types of movements which at their core were not related to grievances of a group of people seeking to influence political outcomes. New social movements (NSMs) were being based on the features of postindustrial societies and concepts related to the quality of life and self-realization [59].

Touraine was inspired by the 1968 France movements and explained his social movement theory by the idea of social action. According to him, human societies not only can reproduce

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[57] Mouffe, Chantal. *On the political*. Psychology Press, 2005.

[58] Melucci, A., Laraña, E., Johnston, H. and Gusfield, J.R., 1994. New social movements: From ideology to identity.

[59] Agnone, Jon. "Amplifying public opinion: The policy impact of the US environmental movement." *Social forces* 85, no. 4 (2007): 1593-1620.

themselves but also would be able to produce their goals and values. Besides, human societies have the ability of self-reflection and self-production.

Melucci, on the other hand, was inspired by Jurgen Habermas's[60] thoughts. According to him, in modern societies, due to the expansion of the government and market, the individualistic activities of people have decreased. Thus, the new social movements attempt to stand against the comprehensive intervention of the system and revive the individuality and the right to have a specific quality of life. The new movement aims to increase the scope of individual authority outside the government control and preserve personal independence against the political and bureaucratic intervention of the government. The new social movements mostly try to challenge the current policies in society. Their goal is the creation of a safe environment for individuals with no authority to practice their philosophies freely [61].

Regarding the comparison between the traditional and new social movement theories there is one characteristic of new social movement theories that distinguish those from other social movement theories. New social movement are hypothesized and shaped in a specific historical phase of progress of Western liberal societies. Precisely, while each theory focus and explain differentiated models clearly like modernization and post modernization, post-materialist society, post-industrial society or advanced capitalist society, they all have one shared aim which is operating based upon a kind of "societal totality". This societal totality is chained to any new evolving structural factors in Western Europe that were generating new forms of sociopolitical

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[60] McCarthy, Thomas. "The critical theory of Jurgen Habermas." (1978).

[61] Larana, Enrique. *New social movements: From ideology to identity*. Temple University Press, 2009.

action while the old order was disbanding in the process of creating a context for collective action [62].

In extension, I am going to elaborate more on the comparison between the features of new social movements with the classic movements and briefly describe the results.

Table 1. Comparison Between Classic and New Social Movements

	Classical Social Movements	**New Social Movements**
Goal	Working along with the status quo	Challenging the status quo
Struggle	Class-conflict regarding the distribution and production	Conflict regarding the norm and values
Motivation	Using movements as a tool for reaching benefit and advantages	Motivation is expressing being/ informal in participation and membership
Structure	Static, focused, and hierarchical	flexible, diverse, open, and participatory
Strategy	Cooperating with the government for reaching the goals	Impacting public mind/people and following the strategies outside politics

- **Goal:** the classical social movements were working along with the status quo; while new social movements challenging the status quo. Put differently, their concern is the status quo and not just the system.

- **Struggle:** the struggle in classical movements was about production and distribution but in new social movements, values and principles are the main concerns.

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[62] Buechler, Steven M. "New Social Movement Theories." Sociological Quarterly 36, no. 3 (1995): 441-464.

- **Motivation:** in classical movements, the movement was a tool for reaching benefits and advantages but in new movements, motivation is expressing being and identity and participation is voluntary with no expectation.

- **Structure:** the classical movements were structured, static and hierarchical while new movements are flexible, diverse, and open.

- **Strategy:** strategies of classical movements were either for cooperating with the government or dominating it to reach their goals. New social movements by following outside politics try to influence public minds and they are not after political power. (Bradley, 2005)[63]

To conclude, what is clear is that all these theories, either classic or new have been developed almost exclusively regarding the social movements occurred in western democracies particularly Europe and United States. As a result, our understanding about the formation, development, and the political outcomes of social movements in other parts of the world remains underdeveloped. What is clear is that the formation of the social movements and the changes they could cause all differ based on the political (democracy or non-democracy), economic, and social context they might occur. Effective strategies in one context might not work in another context. Most of the mechanisms of the mentioned theories are not relevant to the closed political context of the Middle East.[64]

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[63] Gail Claudia Bradley, "The Global Order? New Social Movements, and the Zapatista Movement", WJGR, Vol. 12(1), 2005, pp. 35-6

[64] Giugni, Marco G. "Was it Worth the Effort? The Outcomes and Consequences of Social Movements." *Annual review of sociology* 24, no. 1 (1998): 371-393.

CHAPTER 3

APPLYING DIFFERENT SOCIAL MOVEMENT THEORIES TO THE CASE OF

MENA

The occurrence of social movements is ultimately dependent on the presence of a

conducive political environment. A conducive political environment according to McAdam

(1994)[65] can provide opportunities for successful uprisings. Yet, some resources should be

existing, so that the actors would be able to obtain the mentioned opportunities. Thus, it is

possible to argue that the presence of the essential resources, the aggrieved population with

conversion potential, would be able to change the political opportunities to a social protest.

A conducive political environment consists of five crucial resources that I am going to briefly

explain. ***Participants, social movement organizations, solidarity incentives, networks, leaders.***

According to the scholars, members can be recruited by some indigenous organizations

which are well known as the primary source of movement participants or they can be all

members of a specific coalition with the same demands and dissatisfactions. In both cases as

Oberschall (1978)[66] argues the process of mobilization does not happen by recruiting isolated

and solitary members but in contrast individuals who are already prepared and contributors.

The second resources are social movement organization (SMOs). The tasks of SMOs

vary based on the size and culture of the society, but any type of society SMOs must compete

with other sectors and associations for resources (money, facilities, and labor). But basically,

their tasks are managing mobilizing supporters, handling the financial resources, encouraging

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[65] McAdam, Doug. "Culture and social movements." *New social movements: From ideology to identity* (1994): 36-57.

[66] Oberschall, Anthony. "Theories of social conflict." *Annual review of sociology* 4, no. 1 (1978): 291-315.

mass and the elite public to join the movement, and realizing the change in targets [67]. SMOs have nothing to do with the formation of social movements.

The other resources are established structures of solidarity incentives which are available to indigenous organizations. This term refers to rewards or the motive force which encourages participation in these groups and at the same time stop the problem of free riding. In fact, based on these incentives, members should participate in the process to get the reward. However, it should be mentioned that rewards could be affected based on the structure of society and authorities [68].

The next source is the way in which the aggrieved members of these organizations communicate with each other. It is through the established networks and infrastructures which the quality of movements truly depends on them. Social movement theorists believe that failure or success of contemporary social movements highly depend on the presence or absence of a solid network of communication.

Lastly, almost all the social movement theorists have declared the importance of a recognized leadership for directing a social movement. In fact, it is possible that the aggrieved population cannot handle the correct collective action at the right time even with the presence of favorable political opportunities.

Thus, the existence of these sources is crucial for the preparation of a conducive political environment in which the occurrence of social movements would be so likely in it.

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[67] McCarthy, John D., and Mayer N. Zald. "Resource Mobilization and Social Movements: A Partial Theory." *American Journal of Sociology* 82, no. 6 (1977): 1212-1241.

[68] Haiven, Max, and Alex Khasnabish. "Between Success and Failure: Dwelling with Social Movements in the Hiatus." *Interface: A Journal for and about Social Movements* 5, no. 2 (2013): 472-498.

Now, after reviewing the required resources and desirable preconditions for the emergence of social movements I am going to apply some of the mainstream theories of social movements to the case of MENA to examine if they are applicable to this case and if not, what makes it impossible.

3.1 Applying the Resource Mobilization Theory on the MENA

Based on all the mentioned theories in chapter one, both American and European social movement theorists define social movements as episodes of collective actions which mostly present and structured constant, self-conscious challenge to the present authorities [69]. These theories emerged in constitutionally open and technically advanced western societies. Accordingly, the main attempts of these theories were operating business-like enterprises whose success is dependent on technical proficiency factors. Moreover, the acts of mobilization and objection are more related to engaging and influencing the key political institutions like houses of representatives, congresses, and political parties by the actors of the movement to create the desired changes [70].

Resource mobilization theory which is known as one of the leading models for studying collective actions in Western societies tries to explain how in presence of political opportunities (both facilitative or inhibitive ones) actors would be able to recognize and grasp the opportunities in order to initiate proper actions. Thus, according to Buechler, in this scenario, what is crucial

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[69] Bayat, Asef. "Islamism and social movement theory." *Third World Quarterly* 26, no. 6 (2005): 891-908.

[70] Bayat, Asef. "The Arab Spring and its Surprises." *Development and Change* 44, no. 3 (2013): 587-601.

in distinguishing the outcome and the level of change the oppositional group can create, is the resources available to them before mobilizing along with the ways they employed the resources.

Accordingly, another factor that plays a significant role in social mobilization is structured leadership. This factor could help actors both to recognize grievances and related opportunities for starting collective action [71]. In fact, RMT theorists believe that the requirement for a fruitful one is an executive leadership.

Now the question is whether this would be the case in a context where political settings like proper institutions and specialized staffs are non-existent or if they are present, they are either non-qualified or hardly limited by the authoritarian systems. Additionally, since the political channels for causing an impactful change or creating social and political reforms are under the control of parties with domination over specific exercises of power, mobilization acts like petitioning or lobbying for persuading the government of creating change is futile [72]. MENA region is the only region that is home to several states with all the above characteristics, where mobilization is severely handicapped. Thus, MENA would be a great case for examining these questions, since any of the countries in this region such as Syria, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, and Iran have a unique history of authoritarianism. Moreover, according to the evidence, all the mentioned countries were stubborn in establishing conditions for the requirement of professional staff and launching formal organizations. For instance, Iran experienced the improvement of civil society under the administration of Mohammad Khatami (1977-2005), who was a reformist. During this era, opposition groups such as women and student movements were able to operate

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[71] Ibid

[72] Heydemann, Steven, and Reinoud Leenders. "Authoritarian Learning and Authoritarian Resilience: Regime Responses to the 'Arab Awakening'." *Globalizations* 8, no. 5 (2011): 647-653.

with some degree of freedom. However, this was a unique case and lasted until the rise of

Ahmadinejad to power. Nothing like this case has ever happened in any other more authoritarian

settings that opponent groups have even a low degree of authority or opportunity to involve in

any type of dissident actions.

Relatedly, in all the closed authoritarian environments, government by infusing different

strategies into oppositional movements tries to restrict any act of mobilization attempted to

convince the system to adopt social and political alterations. In the case of MENA, most of the

challenges to the present authorities are some form of open and short-lived contentions without

any ***ideology***, ***structure*** or ***official leadership*** as opposed to the organized and sustained social

movements of the WEST [73].

Another possibility which also happens in MENA states is **barricading any social or**

political change which is going to happen by parties with a monopoly overpower. Thus, in

circumstances, where oppositional groups simply do not have any access to open political

channels or any political rights and they usually face constraints, they might search for

alternative channels which mostly is a public space to use it as a ground for their resistance,

disobedience and express their dissatisfaction or raise their voice to reach their desired demands.

According to evidence, urban streets are well-known particularly as a place for challenging the

status quo by citizens of the MENA region [74]. Some scholars define this phenomenon which had

been seen many times in the Middle East and North Africa as a constant and influential aspect of

contention, to express dissatisfaction in the region. Examples of this phenomenon are the Iranian

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[73] Bayat, Asef. *Life as politics: How ordinary people change the Middle East*. Stanford University Press, 2013.

[74] Beinin, Joel, and Frédéric Vairel, eds. *Social movements, mobilization, and contestation in the Middle East and North Africa*. Stanford University Press, 2013.

revolution in 1979, the uprising of dignity in Bahrain in 1994, the Iranian student movement in 1999, massive demonstrations in Egypt, Tunisia, Yemen and many other countries in the region, in the current century [75].

Similarly, according to the scholars, streets of MENA have the potential to change to a place for expressing objections, faking identities, and expanding solidarities. Moreover, there is always the possibility of transforming a small protest to a massive demonstration with the purpose of challenging the status quo. Thus, it is fair to argue that public places in the MENA have gained a new identity in the past decades which is first the common spot of conflicts between the system and the masses and second, the mediator of initiating and developing social and political conflicts. Additionally, urban spaces have another ability which is playing a strategic role in strengthening the cause of social and political reform. This ability would help them to play an alternative role in acts of contestation and negation like lobbying and awareness-raising and as substitute channels for demanding change and reforms where the proper political channels like senates, parliaments, and institutions are ineffective. To elaborate more on this subject, I am going to review some of the recognized episodes of contention that have occurred across the MENA in the past decades and that have failed.

One of the well-known cases is related to Bahrain uprisings which were during 1994-1999. During these uprisings, about 1500 Bahraini activists, leftists, liberals along with Islamists joined forces, held a sit demonstration in front of the Ministry of Labor to demand democratic

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[75] Najafbagy, R., D. S. Mirzaei, N. Mirsepasi, and S. Iranzade. "Presenting the model of learning organization based on learning organization dimensions questionnaire of watkins-marsick case study, tractor manufacturing complex of Iran." *Middle East Journal of Scientific Research* 7, no. 5 (2011): 809-819.

reforms. However, at the end of the uprisings, their efforts were unsuccessful. Another case is related to the student movement of Iran in 1999 which occurred as the outcome of the attack by groups associated with the conservative parties to the Tehran University dormitory. During this movement, about 60,000 demonstrators which were mostly students and youths occupied public spaces of Tehran and other big cities to show their dissatisfaction with the system. Although, again their efforts in creating political and social reforms were fruitless since their petition got sabotaged by the people in charge inside the governmental and judicial branches, who were responsible to send the reformation bills for the vote to the parliament.

3.2 Applying PPT Theory on MENA Cases

Political process theory, in contrast to RMT instead of focusing on human and material resources available to social movement organizations, focuses on political environments. As mentioned before, the main emphasis of the political process theory is on structural conditions. As such, according to this theory what would pave the way for the formation of the collective action is the favorable political opportunities [76].

Thus, the political process theorists argue that mass mobilization could be a reaction to opportunities that expose the weakness of the state to political pressures. Moreover, they believe that these types of opportunities that can generate mass mobilizations either exist or do not. Put differently, this theory assumes that political opportunities are preexisting conditions, and actors should only wait for the proper time to pursue them.

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[76] Andrews, Kenneth T. "Social movements and policy implementation: The Mississippi civil rights movement and the war on poverty, 1965 to 1971." *American Sociological Review*(2001): 71-95.

However, this is the part that makes application of this theory, which is mainly about pursuing opportunities to mobilize, to countries with a closed authoritarian system like Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, or Syria, debatable. In these cases, and similar states in the MENA region, political opportunities are rarely present and if they are, government-specified them to prevent any questionable actions against the status quo. As such, members of oppositions or oppositional leaders who risk their lives by exceeding the narrow limits could experience consequences like detention, long term jails, and show trials or execution [77]. As an example, it is possible to highlight the case of the execution of Sheikh Nimr in Saudi Arabia who was the supporter of the mass anti-government demonstrations that occurred in Eastern Province in 2011, where the Shia majority has a long history of marginalization.

As a result, it is hard to argue that PPT theory applies to environments like the MENA region where oppositional movements rarely have access to an open opportunity to mobilize. However, as we witnessed the contemporary movements in MENA, lack of political opportunity in MENA led to the formation of movements with specific features. These features are in sharp contrast with organized and constant oppositional movements in the West. Yet, they are momentary battles, without well-defined leadership, clear ideology, or organized organization [78].

Hence, these features induce us to examine factors other than open opportunities and root causes of collective action which could lead to mobilization in the MENA. It is fair to argue that open opportunities as mentioned in PPT theory are not present in the MENA region. However, there are some examples of mobilization in this context such as the Iranian Green

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[77] Moore, Barrington. *Social origins of dictatorship and democracy: Lord and peasant in the making of the modern world*. Vol. 268. Beacon Press, 1993.

[78] Bayat, Asef. *A new Arab street in post-Islamist times*. Foreign Policy, 2011.

Movement in 2009, where although the political space was so closed and no opportunity was provided by the state, groups of women, youths and students who were motivated by the unjust policies of the new administration and dissatisfaction with the election outcome, created the opportunities. Another example in Tunisia is what happened two years later than the Green Movement which triggered the happening of the "Arab Spring". A young street vendor set himself afire in response to the confiscation of his merchandise by a municipal officer. This occurrence caused a massive demonstration in Tunisia and initiated the Arab Spring phenomenon [79].

While many scholars argue that in these types of situations, demonstrators somehow felt obliged to risk their lives regarding the government's behavior, others believe that in closed political spaces where the status quo is unfair, incidents of self-immolations could trigger the future mobilization and leave a mark on history.

Based on the above discussion it is possible to argue that the mainstream theories of social movements that two of them have been applied to the case of MENA without exception, fall short of comprehensively clarifying the concept of mass mobilization. Accordingly, as their characteristics, we can point out to certain assumptions and West-centric tendencies which make them incapable to reckon the uniqueness of MENA cases.

3.3 Applying New Social Movement Theory on MENA Cases

Since the foundation of the new social movement theory is based on the Western technologically advanced and politically open societies, obviously the experience of the Iranian

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[79] Ferree, Myra Marx, Marshall Ganz, Richard Flacks, Deborah B. Gould, Ruud Koopmans, David A. Merrill, David S. Meyer, Francesca Polletta, Sidney Tarrow, and Charles Tilly. *Rethinking social movements: Structure, meaning, and emotion*. Rowman & Littlefield, 2004.

and Tunisian demonstrators who were in the streets demanding change has no reflection on it. As such, the applicability of the new social movement theory with solid assumptions about the social movement is highly problematic to the cases of the Middle East and North Africa.

Since a specific phase in the development of Western liberal societies led to the generation of the new social movement theories, different models of the theory mostly involve advanced capitalist, post-industrial or post materialist societies [80].

New social movements theory formed and could be practiced in Western societies with a stable democracy. Even according to the concept of "levels of historicity", the Middle East and North Africa lie within traditional societies, while Western societies, in the post-industrial [81]. This theory argues that post-industrial societies with the highest level of historicity can produce cultural models. The reason is the distance that has been achieved by historicity from God, oneself, and the world as an object. In contrast, traditional societies that MENA lies in, still are in the middle of the way, being too close to God and thus so involved with religious challenges. Moreover, traditional societies are far away from creating cultural models that manage how they function [82].Although new social movement theory is known for its claims of universality, there have been a lot of caveats suggested by various scholars like Kurzman (2003) regarding the challenges of applying the new social movement theories to the contemporary movements of the MENA region.

As the above discussion reveals, the new social movement theory which is framed and based on the experiences in Europe and North America got evolved along with the democracies

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[80] Buechler, Steven M. "New social movement theories." *Sociological Quarterly* 36, no. 3 (1995): 441-464.

[81] Pichardo, Nelson A. "New social movements: A critical review." *Annual review of sociology* 23, no. 1 (1997): 411-430.

[82] Touraine, Alain. "An introduction to the study of social movements." *Social research* (1985): 749-787.

of the West and importantly, is established based on specific happenings in the United States and Europe.

Many scholarly articles were referred to arguments and works of Huntington in order to explain the process of democratization, outcomes and consequences of the Arab uprisings by help of Democratization Theory. (Stepan and Liz, 2013) In contrast, some scholars try to explain the uprisings in the Middle East by criticizing the democratic transition theory and instead focusing on class forces and class analysis[83].

According to them, the success of Tunisian and Egyptian uprisings was related to the strength of labor movement in the country and significant role of workers themselves. This is what was not present in countries like Syria at the time of uprisings.

Another group of scholars analyze the contemporary movements in the Middle East by help of Rentier State Theory[84]. According to them oil-based rentier governments are more capable in suppressing the governments and support them to stand against the popular uprisings and protest by using force. The reason is the nature of contemporary movements in the Middle East is totally different from what happened in the West in the past. Accordingly, although Western countries are well-known for creating and producing theories related to revolution, protests, uprisings and social movements in the world, Wester scholars admit that by using the existing theories, they faced with some shortcomings and even obsolescence for explain the happenings of the MENA region[85] .

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[83] Allinson, Jamie. "Class forces, transition and the Arab uprisings: a comparison of Tunisia, Egypt and Syria." *Democratization* 22, no. 2 (2015): 294-314.

[84] BENLİ ALTUNIŞIK, Meliha. "Rentier State theory and the Arab uprisings: An appraisal." *Uluslararası İlişkiler/International Relations* (2014): 75-91.

[85] Valbjørn, Morten, and Frédéric Volpi. "Revisiting theories of Arab politics in the aftermath of the Arab uprisings." *Mediterranean Politics* 19, no. 1 (2014): 134-136.

Yet, the literature related to theorizing events and uprisings in the Middle East is not so rich, and contemporary movements of the Middle East have been analyzed less academically. Moreover, the fact is that most of the available research related to this topic have lacked a well-defined theoretical approach to analyze conditions, processes, and outcomes of these uprisings. What is common among all the available pieces is each writer just uses one or more variable for analyzing the Middle Eastern movements[86][87].

This research, however, attempts to explain the uprisings in the MENA region by combining two categories of theories: structural analysis and political agency. In this way, there is going to be a more comprehensive research globalization, technology, and international power; leadership and relationship among states.by having a multivariable study. Reviewing the structure of state and political system; economic conditions; social and cultural trend, agency of elites, groups, classes, and social forces; military and ideological factors; the effects of globalization, technology, and international power; leadership and relationship among states.

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[86] Luciani, Giacomo. *Combining economic and political development: The experience of MENA*. Brill, 2017.

[87] Mushtaq, Abdul Qadir. "ARAB UPRISING: ITS CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES." In *[2017] Congreso Internacional de Ciencias Sociales*. 2017.

CHAPTER 4

THE NATURE OF MENA MOVEMENTS

The MENA region is a dynamic environment with unique challenges which are different from the rest of the world. Furthermore, the process and emergence of the events in this region is not like the other parts of the world. This region, due to its geopolitical condition and natural resources has been transformed to the heart of the world and was pregnant with some critical happenings in the twentieth century. The war between Iraq and Afghanistan and the Arab Spring are the most important ones.

The beginning of the Arab Spring was from Tunisia, but it was able to spread all over the region in a short amount of time. In this vein, each of the Western and Eastern analysts have started to look at these happenings from their own point of view and analyze it based on their preferred theories. Majority of them just called these happenings the process of democratization and some of them called them the Islamic movements.

However, what has happened in this region contained significant structural changes in a way that not only transformed the domestic political structure of countries, but also in the international domain created some major changes in the power exchanges and eventually led to sustainable effects. Under the influence of these uprisings and movements, people started practicing democracy and demanding independence in the domestic and international arena. Now the question is what the reason behind the uniqueness of these movements is and what makes them different with the other social movements and even the previous social movements in this region [88].

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[88] Merrick, Dylan. "The Tunisian Revolution as a Catalyst to the Arab Spring: A Case Study of Revolution in North Africa and the Middle East." PhD diss., 2018

As we realized the theories of social movements either classic or modern, fall short in explaining the contemporary social movements in the MENA region. The main reason for the inapplicability of these theories on MENA's movements could be the revision of the nature of MENA's movements while theories of social movements either classic or new are west-centric. Moreover, among the little amount of literature which theoretically studies social movements in non-democracies or non-western societies the assumptions related to the social movements in the MENA region never got revised. In fact, there is no model or theory capable of describing the current amalgam of MENA and the formation of the fruitful social movements in it [89].

Reviewing various social movements in MENA reveals this fact that they are classified as "exceptionalism" cases with religious roots, fundamentalist nature and far from anything considered to be idealistic or advanced (Utopian). Scholars like Tilly or Melucci, use terms like anti-democratic, anti-modern or reactionary for explaining MENA oppositional movements. Furthermore, the oppositional movements in MENA marginalized in the debate of Islamism and secularism while most of the scholars always refer to the Iranian Islamic Revolution in 1979 as a turning point.

However, the fact is the nature of the oppositional movements in MENA has changed while the environment in the MENA region is still far from utopia and democratization. The recent mass mobilizations in the MENA region were all about demanding human dignity and citizenship rights, freedom, justice, and good governance. The transformation of the oppositional movements in MENA is visible in the slogans of demonstrators, e.g. in Tunisia, "Tunisia, Tunisia, free, free, in Iran "Where is my vote?" and in Egypt "Enough". Put differently, after

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[89] Alrasheed, Ghadah. "Tweeting towards utopia: Technological utopianism and academic discourse on political movements in the Middle East and North Africa." PhD diss., Carleton University, 2017.

three decades, the transformation is obvious in social and political awareness of unrelated classes, religious and ethnic groups.

The main reason behind the transformation of the nature of social movements in MENA is related to the ***demographic change*** as a matter of a region-wide baby boom which had started in the 1980s. In Iran, the beginning of Iran-Iraq (1980-1988) was equal to encouraging people to the expansion of their families by announcing a series of family policies, for national security reasons which caused a speedy population growth. According to the World Bank, in 2013 the population of Iran was 77 million with 60% under the age of 30 [90]. Additionally, Tunisia experienced a similar thing by the introduction of family planning programs in the 1990s which created a massive population growth. This occurrence transformed the country into a young nation which according to the World Bank, in 2013 the population of Tunisia was 10.5 million with 51% under the age of 30.

The second critical reason related to the transformation of the nature of social movements in the MENA region is as a matter of population growth especially in Tunisian and Iranian cases, most of the population are youth which majority of them are university students. Additionally, students are the most cohesive and efficient group of activists. According to Huntington you one should search for the most consistent critics of the government at the universities [91].

However, the important point is that most of the unemployment is among the educated class with a higher level of education. This became one of the main challenges of the MENA countries such as Egypt. According to data it has been predicted that the current number of

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[90] Yüceşahin, M. Murat, and A. Yiğitalp Tulga. "Demographic and social change in the Middle East and North Africa: Processes, spatial patterns, and outcomes." *Population Horizons* 14, no. 2 (2017): 47-60.

[91] Huntington, Samuel P. *Political order in changing societies*. Yale University Press, 2006.

unemployment which is about 415 million would reach to the number of 823 million people in 2050. Accordingly, the growth number of unemployed youths would increase from 36 million to 56 million in 2050, while the economy of the Arabic countries on average has a growth of less than 5% annually [92].

According to the above table, the highest number of youth population is related to Egypt. This number has been increasing since 1985. The important point is that due to initiation of open economy policies and the presence of youths at the universities, the number of graduated youths is increasing. These graduated youths try to increase their awareness regarding the political and economic conditions of youths in other countries through the social media, and this is the precondition for creation of dissatisfaction. Thus, we should say that the main opposers of the government were unhappy and unsatisfied youths that were aware of the politics and economy of the country in contrast to non-educated people [93].

Therefore, the main difference between the current generation and the previous generation is the level of their *education*. Additionally, the current generation is far from the traditional ideologies and are trying to push back any ideology related to the Arab, Islamism, or nationalism.

Moreover, as a matter of this dichotomy, the main demand of the MENA youths is the termination of the old order and substitution of the traditional order with a new one which would recognize democratic and individualistic values. This contrast between the new demand and the political awareness of people and the social and political context of the Middle Eastern state

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[92] Malik, Adeel, and Bassem Awadallah. "The economics of the Arab Spring." *World Development* 45 (2013): 296-313.

[93] Goldstone, Jack A. "Understanding the revolutions of 2011: weakness and resilience in Middle Eastern autocracies." *Foreign Affairs* (2011): 8-16.

Table 2. Youth Population in Selected Countries

Country	Youth Population[94] (Per 1000 total population)			Percentage of Youth to the Population			Unemployment Rate	
	1985	2005	2025	1985	2005	2025	Male	Female
Bahrain	67	110	133	16	15	14	17	27
Egypt	9292	15332	17862	19	21	18	21	40
Syria	2123	4369	5176	20	23	18	16	36
Tunisia	1530	2098	1614	21	21	13	31	29
Yemen	1966	4497	7594	20	21	20	31	14

Source: United Nations World Population Prospects: the 2011 Revision

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[94] There is no universally agreed international definition of the youth age group. For statistical purposes, however, the United Nations—without prejudice to any other definitions made by Member States, defines 'youth' as those persons between the ages of 15 and 24 years.

creates a **new sociological context**. This new context has two main features. Firstly, it tries to separate religion from politics and secondly, it defines a new sociopolitical plan for governing. Some scholars by analyzing the recent happenings in the Middle East argue that one theme was mutual among all of them which was the Islamic revival. Put differently, Islamic ideology which was initiated by the Islamic revolution of Iran in 1979 is transforming from the thoughtless collective action of following religious groups or clerics to practicing religion individually and differentiating the religious ideas. The youth generation of ME has realized that a ***paradigm shift*** from the old order to a new one is necessary to produce ideas, reinforce opinions and eventually initiate effective reforms.

In addition, this paradigm shift has caused a new mindset among the Arab societies that prefer democratic and open society instead of the radical and totalitarian ideologies, utopian paradigm, or retrospective beliefs. Yet, some scholars believe that this led to the tendency to live as a middle class in the public opinion which in contrast to the past is not just related to the middle groups but most of the poor people of cities and villages also have joined to this new mindset. This tendency to live as a middle class more than having an economic dimension, is related tendencies and individual and citizenship requirements. It is a new mindset that reflects the desire to live in a modern society along its democratic and civilian necessities. The middle class of the Arab countries were not an important segment of the society and often were under the influence of Islamic movements. However, the transformations of the society prove the growth of this segment and their demand for enjoying the rule of law, individual rights, civilian freedoms, and respect to the human dignity. This new mindset is gradually encouraging bigger groups of society to support democracy, civilian and individual freedoms, and rule of law. Governments who prefer to uphold the status quo with old and humiliating ideologies would

become non-legitimate in public opinion. It can be said, this mindset transformation and democratic and civilian demands are the reasons behind the expiration of totalitarian, non-democratic ideologies.

What has happened recently in the Arab world is that a big part of the public opinion prefers a government who respects rule of law, human dignity, and individual freedoms to abstract justice which just exists in the religious discourses. This is what proves the fading of the status of Islam and religious influential organizations among the society.

Moreover, the other impact of this paradigm shift is distancing from the worldview based on hostility with the West in the name of Nationalism or Islam. Previously, civilians hardly believed that the West is the major enemy of Islam and the Arab world and most of the society's entanglements are related to the conspiracies and Western policies. What we have witnessed during the Arab Spring and after it, could be a sign of formation of a new generation of social movements with the institutional differences but some tendencies of the previous decades persist [95].

For instance, critical changes which can be seen in demographic behaviors of women like the marriage age, fertility rate is the exact reflection of this significant cultural transformation are also noteworthy.

There is no doubt that ***new technologies and social media*** platforms have changed the culture of spreading news and information. In this regard, MENA is also not an exception. The internet despite filtering plays a significant role in transforming the culture of MENA's movements. The spread of information through social media and the circulation of regional news have some key impacts. First, due to the possibility of remaining anonymous most of the online

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[95] Khosrokhavar, Farhad. *New Arab revolutions that shook the world*. Routledge, 2016.

publishers have no fear of expressing their thoughts and ideas even extreme or radical. Second, as mentioned earlier, the speed of spreading news and information is much faster. Also, there is the possibility of accessing websites from all cities in the region. (Moldovan, 2020)[96] Accordingly, most of the news which is published in newspapers and other journals is risky and would easily circulate on the internet. Thus, we can argue that the internet and social media are essential tools for framing political battles in closed political systems. Accordingly, the internet is the most influential option for interaction, communication, and mobilization of the social movements [97].

Finally, successful online political activities could combine online grievances with the street protests. Although, some scholars argue that the internet would induce solitude in a way that people limit their fight to online activities, nonetheless, what we learned from the recent happenings in the Arabic countries was that for a region in which most of the media is under the strict control of the government and protests are not legalized, the internet is the best and most accessible channel for the interaction of the protesters [98].

Based on the above discussion and the recent social movements in MENA now it is possible to conclude that in contrast to what is hardly believed, MENA cases are neither compatible with the dominant social movement theories and their presuppositions. Nor do they adapt to the term "exceptionalism" which is a perspective that has been used by scholars like

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[96] Moldovan, Raluca. "The Social Media Revolution That Failed: Lessons From The Arab Spring." *Redefining Community in Intercultural Context* 9, no. 1 (2020): 257-269.

[97] Khondker, Habibul Haque. "Role of the new media in the Arab Spring." *Globalizations* 8, no. 5 (2011): 675-679.

[98] Wolfsfeld, Gadi, Elad Segev, and Tamir Sheafer. "Social media and the Arab Spring: Politics comes first." *The International Journal of Press/Politics* 18, no. 2 (2013): 115-137.

Melucci and Touraine for describing almost all the MENA cases as anti-movements with anti-modern and regressive engagements.

The amalgam theme of the recent mass movements in the Middle East and North Africa highlights the necessity for theoretical revision and moving beyond the trans-historical models and general narratives towards models and theories which account for the exceptionality of MENA cases and the closed-authoritarian environments in which these movements occur and progress [99].

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[99] Danju, Ipek, Yasar Maasoglu, and Nahide Maasoglu. "From autocracy to democracy: The impact of social media on the transformation process in North Africa and Middle East." *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences* 81 (2013): 678-681.

CHAPTER 5

PREVENTIVE FACTORS OF DEMOCRATIZATION IN THE MENA REGION;

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The manifest feature of the Middle East is the political history of it. Factors like the role of colonization, religion, culture, and tradition have been significantly impactful on the political structure of the region and have shaped this mutual fate. The disparate structure of the authoritarian regimes faced a dichotomy along with the globalization and the expansion of international political interactions. Thus, this dichotomy between the new and old order has caused many critical socio-political challenges.

Some of the Middle Eastern states have started generating some reformation in their political structures for withdrawing this crisis. However, based on the historical background of the sociopolitical structures, these reformations have never been so practical. Having said that, one of the main issues of the region is the lack of democracy which is a hot topic among scholars. Although, there have been many efforts for solving this issue (lack of democracy in MENA), there was no luck so far.

As such, this chapter tries to analyze and examine the obstacles to democratization which is the main reason behind the unique nature of the MENA and its movements. Also, it is likely to argue that lack of democracy is what could cause the failure of movements in the region if there is any.

Democracy by its main definition, which is the outcome of a long and gradual process has emerged in few countries and in most countries is a new and imported phenomenon. Today, the importance of democracy is so high that some non-democratic counties try to take advantage of this phrase to prove the legitimacy of their political systems. In fact, through times, the

concept of democracy has been transformed to one of the most important and at the same time ambiguous political concepts [100].

Various political systems in the US, European countries, the single party states in Africa and the past and present communist regimes or even religious movements all call themselves democracy. This created lots of controversies among the different political systems to the point that many of the political systems just present themselves as a democratic system.

Thus, the international organization of UNESCO, launched a conference in 1950 for clarifying all these debates regarding the concept of democracy with more than 50 countries of the world. [101] The important point of this conference was that all the participants were declaring that they have democratic system, but some of them stated themselves as the one and only democratic system. This conference proved that the definition of democracy in communist systems is far from the American or European countries. The Western systems at this conference believed that democracy means free election, freedom of press and media, freedom of political assembly, freedom of religion, freedom of speech, equality, the right to oppose the government, the right to choose a job, the right to form free labor unions, the right to travel freely, migrate temporary or permanently and the most important one, being free from fear and dread [102].

Nowadays all the democratic systems believe that the reason behind establishment of democracy is creation of political, cultural, and economic freedoms. These freedoms do not mean spreading financial, cultural, or religious corruption, but are necessary for flourishing the

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[100] Munck, Gerardo L. "What is democracy? A reconceptualization of the quality of democracy." *Democratization* 23, no. 1 (2016): 1-26.

[101] https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000114587

[102] Lane, Jan-Erik, Svante O. Ersson, and Svante Ersson. *Politics and society in Western Europe*. Sage, 1999.

abilities of all members of the society. A person should be the protector of the society's interests and the society should be the protector of an individual's interests. This requires cultural development and elimination of political and economic barriers [103].

The Middle East is one of the regions that has not experienced as much democracy. However, not all Middle Eastern countries are in the same position. Thus, it is not possible to give the same rule for analyzing the level of democracy in all of them. Yet, this chapter aims to first review the features of developing democracy and later study some of the obstacles for democratization that are all present among the countries experiencing conflicts.

5.1 Democracy Development Indicators

The level and progress of democracy are different in various societies with democratic structure and system. Accordingly, there are specific features for conceptualizing and measuring the level of democracy in democratic societies. I am going to mention some of these indicators below:

5.1.1 Election

Fair and free election in which the main decision-makers in government get selected by citizens. Yet, it is not possible to call any society with an election a democratic society. Voters should be able to decide freely and be safe from any governmental threats for voting specific people. In democratic societies, participation in elections is not mandatory. Although, in

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[103] McLaverty, Peter. "Civil society and democracy." *Contemporary Politics* 8, no. 4 (2002): 303-318.

democratic societies all adult citizens, parties and groups (even anti-government) are eligible to vote without voter suppression[104].

5.1.2 Freedom of Political Groups and Parties

Groups and political parties assume as one of the key features of the government and the bridge of interaction between nations and democratic systems. There is no doubt that democracy could only resist the continuous and active presence of political parties. Political parties in countries and the competition among them over more power and authority would encourage any party for trying to increase its acceptance rate and citizen satisfaction[105].

5.1.3 Distribution of Political Power

Democratic societies emphasize on the power separation and interaction among the powers. In fact, this is one of the essential conditions for the formation of a democratic structure. According to Montesquieu (1977)[106], who is well known for his theory of distribution of political power, liberty would be at its highest level, if all three functions of government- legislation, law enforcement, and adjudication distribute in different hands[107]. Parliament should be the reflection of people's will and the government should be the executor. preventing any deviation from the

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[104] Voter suppression is a strategy used to influence the outcome of an election by discouraging or preventing specific groups of people from voting.

[105] Von Soest, Christian. "Democracy prevention: The international collaboration of authoritarian regimes." *European Journal of Political Research* 54, no. 4 (2015): 623-638.

[106] de Secondat Montesquieu, Charles, Charles de Secondat baron de Montesquieu, and Melvyn Richter. *The Politcal Theory of Montesquieu*. CUP Archive, 1977.

[107] Foster, Michael Beresford, William Thomas Jones, and Lane W. Lancaster. Master of Political Thought: Machiavelli to Bentham, by WT Jones. Vol. 2. Houghton Mifflin, 1941.

constitution is legislation's task. Yet, although democratic societies emphasize the distribution of political power any of the functions of government should monitor other power's operations.

5.1.4 Fundamental Freedoms

Freedom of speech, freedom of mass media, civil freedoms, freedom of thoughts and beliefs, equality of men and women and existence of equal opportunity in politics are all factors for measuring democracy.

5.1.5 Social and Political Equality

Equality of men and women and the existence of equal social and political opportunities are among the main features for measuring democracy. Revising the constitution law and applying it for securing people's rights is another impactful factor.

5.1.6 Independence of Political Systems

The independence of political systems is necessary for the implementation of social issues in the best possible way. Since nowadays social issues have become so complicated office cadres must be specialized. This specialty and necessity happen by a structural variety of political systems. Accordingly, this structural variety releases the system from any social, ethnic or class affiliations. Max Weber believes that the rationality of the political system is the best method for bringing an organization's power structure into focus[108].

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[108] Arblaster, Anthony. "Democratic society and its enemies." Democratization 6, no. 1 (1999): 33-49.

5.2 The Obstacles to Democracy

The Middle East and North Africa are among the regions which have witnessed little democratic progress. However, not all the countries in the region are in the same position. Thus, it is not possible to generate the same argument for all of them. The obstacles to democracy are various and numerous and here I am going to point out to some of them.

5.2.1 The Structure of Tradition

The traditional structure in developing societies would create strong barriers in political growth and development path. However, the reason behind most of the political issues in these societies is the disturbing of the traditional structure by the growth factors. The rapid modernization would cause ruptures in society and politics [109].

Rapid economic development along with the new values which have been created as a matter of modern technology put the traditional values against the new ones. The growth of civil organizations in developing societies has created dissimilar values than the traditional norms and beliefs recast among the young generation. Additionally, most of these values do not apply to traditional societies and are against them.

The growth of societies with modern values has caused political growth among the middle class and increased democratic demands. Thus, acceptance of the Middle Eastern traditional structures has been challenged by these democratic demands.

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[109] Watenpaugh, Keith David. *Being modern in the Middle East: revolution, nationalism, colonialism, and the Arab middle class*. Princeton University Press, 2012.

However, most of the Middle Eastern regimes for maintaining their traditional authority not only have defended these traditional norms and structures but also by the help of ideological or even modern tools tried to strengthen them [110].

In other words, Middle Eastern regimes are trying to represent their political or traditional ideology, based on power, as a sacred entity which the obedience of that is mandatory. However, some scholars believe that tradition is not always an obstacle to political growth and development but could sometimes be effective in the development of the societies. Thus, we can argue that a combination of some modern and traditional values could be so effective in the process of political development and weakening of the authoritarian regimes of the region [111].

5.2.2 The Weakness of Civil and Cultural Society

Civil society consists of social organizations, institutions and associations which are free from any governmental dependency and have a crucial impact on the formation of political power [112][113]. In a civil society, non-governmental actors, like political parties, social development associations, non-governmental organizations, business syndicates and some interest groups exist. These organizations have the potentials to solve many of the civilians' issues and, they could work against the system blockades [114].

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[110] Diamond, Larry. "Why are There no Arab Democracies? 21 (1) J." *DEMOCRACY* 93 (2010).

[111] Diamond, Larry, and Leonardo Morlino, eds. *Assessing the quality of democracy*. JHU Press, 2005.

[112] Bashiriye, Hosein. "Self-Consciousness and Political Identities in Iran." National, 2002.

[113] Jajarmi, Hossein Imani, and Mostafa Azkia. "Challenges for Local Democracy in Iran: A Study of Islamic City Councils." *Middle East Critique* 18, no. 2 (2009): 145-159.

[114] Bellin, Eva. "The robustness of authoritarianism in the Middle East: Exceptionalism in comparative perspective." *Comparative politics* (2004): 139-157.

Thus, one of the factors that could prevent democratization in the Middle East is the weakness of civil society in most of the states in the region. Some argue that due to the presence of colonization in the past and lack of democratic regimes in the presence, currently, most of the Middle Eastern societies are not ready for the genesis of a civil society which could later bring democratization.

We must admit that expect for the nature of authoritarian regimes in the Middle East, there have been some moves towards the formation of civil society and the number is increasing each day. Nowadays, thousands of non-governmental organizations have become initiated in the Middle East which even some of them have challenged the governmental structures [115]. These organizations have formed as a matter of economic development, population growth and increased expansion of the level of education. Unfortunately, although the number of these organizations is high in the region still, they could not reach the adequate strength and impact.

5.2.3 Lack of Political, Social and Economic Development

Democratic institutions would maintain among the nations that are ready to accept and exploit them. This preparation needs a level of economic-social and political development. According to the Humanitarian Development Nexus's report, the Arab world's gross domestic product of 22 Arabic states would not reach half of Spain's GDP[116]. This report claims that the income of one-third of the nations of non-oil Arab states in the Middle East is less than 2$ per day. In most of these countries most people are below the poverty line and the minority on top of

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[115] Esfahani, Hadi Salehi. "A Reexamination of the Political Economy of Growth in the MENA Countries." Contributions to Economic Analysis 278 (2006): 61-102.

[116] https://www.unocha.org/es/themes/humanitarian-development-nexus

it, which proves the authority of a specific level of society. The percentage of women's involvement in Middle East politics is so low and only 35% of the seats in parliament are held by females. The level of literacy and awareness is so low in the Middle East in comparison to the rest of the world. For instance, in 1996 all the Arabic states with a population of around 300 million, there were only 140 newspapers with 9.2 publications. While, at the same time, in the United States with a population of around 270 million there were 2939 newspapers with 111 million publications and in East Asia 400 newspapers with 102 publications.

In 2001, internet users were 50% of the population while in the Arabic countries it was just 6% of the population [117].

Cultural poverty is one of the main obstacles of democracy or the government of people by people. When people are not aware of their rights for surveillance and intervention in social and political issues, they will not be able to either use their rights or defend it. As a matter of this unawareness, an autocrat or an authoritarian class would be able to dominate.

5.2.4 The Compatibility or Incompatibility Between Religion and Democracy

Some scholars believe that the compatibility of religion and democracy is not possible. They argue that it is not possible to apply all the religious guidelines to everyone in democratic countries. Relatedly, there is much difference between religious and democratic values, and this could create incompatibility between democracy and religion.

In other words, it is not possible to put religious and democratic guidelines in one basket. Some of the radical philosophers in the Middle East, emphasis on the incompatibility of Islam and democracy and argue that democratic definitions and processes are against the Islamic

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[117] Sajedi, Amir. "Greater Middle East: Opportunity or Challenge?" India Quarterly 62, no. 4 (2006): 191-212.

culture. Besides, they believe that the creation of democratic reformations is equal to abolishing the traditional religion and culture of the Middle East [118]. They assume that Islam is the foundation of Middle Eastern people's life and thus, there should be an Islamic government to rule based on Islamic law or Sharia.

As such, based on the arguments of this group of radical Islamists, democratization could not happen in states with Islamic rules[119]. The reason is that in the democratic societies power is in the hand of people, while in Islamic societies people do not have any authority. For instance, in religious systems equality between men and women or female candidacies for jobs within the judiciary or the presidency itself might be impossible. There is another group of scholars who reject the theory of incompatibility of religion and democracy and have another perspective on this subject matter. They argue that all religions emphasize on equality as the most important principle of democracy.

According to Tocqueville (1840)[120], while democracy reaches a level of unlimited freedom and materialism, organized religion would be able to control people and prevent them from unethical acts by promising them heaven and eternality.

This group of scholars also argue that some religious clerics with an extra understanding of religion can have an updated comprehension of religion. These clerics bring religion to the help of democracy and prove their compatibility. Accordingly, they believe that this compatibility already has been verified in modern democratic societies.

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[118] Elshtain, Jean Bethke. "Religion and democracy." *Journal of democracy* 20, no. 2 (2009): 5-17.

[119] Hafezian, MH, and Hasan Ahmadian. "Realignment of Opposition Forces in the Arab Middle East: Islamist or Liberal Ddemocratic." (2010): 63-91.

[120] De Tocqueville, Alexis. *Alexis de Tocqueville on democracy, revolution, and society*. University of Chicago Press, 1982.

Majority of the people in democratic societies are supporters of religion, and churches and mosques are actively involved. According to the moderate religious philosophers, there is nothing in religious beliefs and doctrines that show their compatibility with the corrupt and authoritarian systems. With this perception, this group participates in the democratic elections or support democratic institution's establishment [121].

The reason behind the incompatibility of religion and democracy in the Middle East is that some of the Middle Eastern societies are still traditional and democracy for them is a new and unknown concept. In other words, economy, urbanization, modernization, technology, media, and existing organizations did not exceed the required level for the formation of civil society and the foundation of democracy. However, the liberal's attempts along with some processes could pave the way for introducing democracy to the endemic and religious traditions.

It is possible to argue that what could cause compatibility between religion and democracy is the separation of religious organizations -which are a part of the cultural organization- from the political organization. Put differently, the separation of religion from the government. This separation, which many of the religious and non-religious scholars supports it, would uphold religion and democracy [122].

The majority of the philosophers believe that the combination of religion and politics is a dangerous amalgamation and could cause catastrophe for both religion and democracy. Moreover, witnessing the compatibility between religion and democracy in democratic societies highlights the fact of separation of religion from the government. Unfortunately, in most Middle

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[121] Haghighat, Seyed Sadegh. "Iranian identity in the west: A discursive approach." Shi'i Islam and identity (2012): 40-63.

[122] Ehteshami, Anoushiravan. "Is the Middle East Democratizing?." *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 26, no. 2 (1999): 199-217.

Eastern countries this combination exists and the majority of the region's leaders, by improper use of religion, try to stabilize their political position.

5.2.5 Structure of the Non-Democratic Middle Eastern Systems

Monarchies and religious regimes are still existing in the Middle East region in the states like Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Oman, Yemen, etc. According to the Freedom House report in 2010, from the 22 Arabic states in the Middle East 15 of them are among the authoritarian regimes and the remained 7 states only have relative freedom [123].

The political structures of these regimes were under monarchies for years with tribal and religious tendencies. Leaders of the Middle Eastern countries use these tendencies as their political philosophy for ruling and maintaining. These types of political systems prioritize the interests of individuals or specific groups over the rest of the society or country and avoid other layers of the society to intervene in their political structure. Thus, these types of systems recognize democracy as a major threat to the survival of their systems. These systems are always in battle with modernization and accept modernization to the level that lets them deploy it along with their benefits. Accordingly, in these systems social and political freedoms are allowed over conversations about random and minor subjects to distract the crowds [124].

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[123] House, Freedom. "Freedom House. org." *Map of Freedom in the World. Available from http://www. freedomhouse. org/template. cfm* (2010).

[124] Hussain, Muzammil M., and Philip N. Howard. "Opening closed regimes: civil society, information infrastructure, and political Islam." *Digital media and political engagement worldwide: A comparative study* (2012): 200-220.

According to Huntington (1993), the future of these regimes is dark because they are avoiding modernization and in fact, this avoidance only would make their legitimacy questionable, but also would weaken the pillars of their throne.[125]

Authoritarian regimes always try to prevent democratization in the Middle East. Moreover, for preventing permeation of democracy into their authorities by monitoring social media and via intimidation, undercover police networks or even sometimes military. However, confronting the development of democracy as a matter of modernization is not always an easy task for authoritarian regimes. Thus, they must slow down the process of modernization sometimes or join the army or give them some leverages to prevent the damages. Other tricks of these regimes are threatening and marginalizing dissenters from society, increasing the costs of reformations, suppressing nationalist passion and supporters of democracy by representing them as anti-religion or westernized. Additionally, by falsifying the possibility of chaos as a matter of reformation they try to preserve the status quo [126].

5.2.6 Rentier States

The term "rent" defines revenues which are much higher than the normal income. In a broader context rent points out to revenues which are higher than the income which could be achieved normally [127]. Some argue that rent is the revenue which gets achieve with no effort and

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[125] Huntington, Samuel P. The third wave: Democratization in the late twentieth century. Vol. 4. University of Oklahoma press, 1993.

[126] Ross, Michael L. "Will oil drown the Arab Spring: Democracy and the resource curse." Foreign Aff. 90 (2011): 2.

[127] Khan, Mushtaq H., and Kwame Sundaram Jomo, eds. Rents, rent-seeking and economic development: Theory and evidence in Asia. Cambridge University Press, 2000.

is in contrast with concepts like wage and interest which are the results of effort and economic accomplishments [128].

Adam Smith assumes rent as a specific source of income that is different from other revenues such as wages and profits. This type of income could be achieved by a specific individual or group with no effort or special productive activity. However, in a healthy economy, profits and wages are the outcomes of the productive effort. According to Ricardo rent is the surplus or differential gain. Rent goes to the government's pocket from the tax on exports, firms, and natural resources companies. Exploiting natural resources does not need too many human resources. Thus, the achieved income from the rent instead of getting split among the citizens goes to the government's pocket. In this way, it is possible to call any government who achieves most of its revenue from external or natural resources a rentier state [129].

One of the critical obstacles of democratization in the Middle East is the presence of rentier states in the region. Middle Eastern governments are active in most of the economic sectors and furthermore have authority not only on natural resources of the country but also on other economic sectors.

The reason behind the creation of rent in the Middle East is the existence of a monopoly over the competition. Access to high revenues with no force for distribution most of it the interests to business and mine owners or human resources would help rentier states with economic-political independence in the country. Relatedly, they could make social classes

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[128] Anderson, Lisa. "The state in the middle east and north africa." Comparative Politics 20, no. 1 (1987): 1-18.

[129] Haji-Yousefi, Amir Mohammad. "Iran and the 2011 Arab revolutions: perceptions and actions." *Discourse: An Iranian Quarterly* 10, no. 1-2 (2012): 23-60.

dependent on themselves and therefore shift the path of social developments in order to pursue their political interests [130].

Some of the non-oil rich Middle Eastern states, receiving a significant amount of foreign aid(rent) regularly. For instance, Egypt after the Camp David contract has received 28 million dollars annually from the United States. In the oil-rich Middle Eastern countries, companies are dependent on treasuries since most of the government's revenue is from oil. Moreover, since taxation is not the only source of the government's revenue, the government is not responsible to the people and does not pursue political development. Michael Ross argues that there is a positive significant correlation between the higher individual and firm tax rates and democratization in countries [131].

Plus, due to the high oil revenues, the rentier states for increasing citizen satisfaction sometimes offer several economic and social welfare services. However, they just offer services that could not create any threat towards them or is appropriate for upholding the status quo [132].

Beblavy (2001)[133] argues that in the Arab world, specific social and economic interests are organized in a way that could dominate the major sector of the governmental rent. In these types of rentier states, new layers of individuals and benefit groups get formed that they also would create another layer of individuals and benefit groups. As such, the economy would be a

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[130] Katouzian, Homa. The political economy of modern Iran: Despotism and pseudo-modernism, 1926–1979. Springer, 1981.
[131] Ross, Michael L. "Does oil hinder democracy?" *World politics*53, no. 3 (2001): 325-361.

[132] Pourahmadi H. "Media Political Economy and Elections: Theorizing Electoral Inequalities." (2009): 39-62.

[133] Beblavy, Miroslav. "Understanding the waves of agencification and the governance problems they have raised in Central and Eastern European Countries." *OECD Journal on Budgeting* 2, no. 1 (2001): 121-139.

hierarchy of rentier layers which the government is on top as the main supporter of all other rentiers in the economy [134].

What is apparent is that the demand for democracy, social and economic development along with globalization is increasing in the Middle East. This fact has put authorities under pressure. Inefficient governments have caused massive dissatisfaction due to their tendency of reacting to people's demands and needs. Although occasionally some of the states in the region pretend their applicability with democratic features, the truth is the main obstacle of democratization in MENA is the authoritarian regimes who try to uphold the status quo. Most of the time, human wisdom is at a lower level than the decisions of leaders of Middle Eastern regimes. Thus, controlling these regimes is not possible through the civic organization, mass media, political parties, and NGOs. Democratic groups always get suppressed and threatened due to a lack of advertising tools and opposing the authoritarian regimes. In fact, lack of resources and advertising tools and continuous threats have slowed down the process of democratization in the region. Also, there is no consensus among the Islamic philosophers regarding the necessity of democratization in Islamic societies. To plant the seed of democracy in the Middle East, Islamic philosophers should create a logical connection between the new world order and religious thoughts by renewing Islamic ideologies [135].

Each society grows differently and political engagement in each society would be based on norms, values, and historical condition of it. Some of these societies are getting close to democratization faster and some slower. However, it seems that MENA countries have faced

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[134] Schwarz, Rolf. "The political economy of state-formation in the Arab Middle East: Rentier states, economic reform, and democratization." *Review of International Political Economy*15, no. 4 (2008): 599-621.

[135] Hinnebusch, Raymond. "Authoritarian persistence, democratization theory and the Middle East: An overview and critique." *Democratization* 13, no. 3 (2006): 373-395.

numerous difficulties in this way. To get rid of some of these blockades, it is necessary to

increase the level of public awareness in the region to pave the path for reaching a civil society.

Encouraging Middle Eastern regimes towards democratization and formation of efficient

governments through free and fair elections along with economic growth and independent media

could be so impactful on eliminating the obstacles of democracy in the region [136].

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[136] Ross, Michael L. "What have we learned about the resource curse?." Annual Review of Political Science 18 (2015): 239-259.

CHAPTER 6

CASE STUDIES; MECHANISMS OF POLITICAL CHANGE IN MENA

So far, in the previous chapters, we have reviewed all theories of social movements and checked the applicability of some of the main social movement theories on the MENA region. Accordingly, we realized that theories of social movements, both classic and the new ones, fall short in explaining the formation and process of social movements in the MENA region due to its unique context. Moreover, since the presence of democracy is one of the key requirements for the formation of social movements and MENA has experienced no or little steps towards democratization, we reviewed the obstacles of democratization in the MENA region in order to learn about all the preventing factors and barriers of any reformation in the region.

During the Arab Spring, between 2011 to 2013, some states were successful in the regime transformation while others failed. In this chapter, I am going to review some cases which were somehow successful among all other social movements in the MENA region to create some reform like Tunisia and Egypt along Bahrain which was not successful for achieving its demands and examine their similarities and differences. In this way it would be possible to present a model for describing the favorable setting and factors for the formation of a fruitful social movement in MENA.

As we mentioned earlier after the Islamic Revolution of Iran none of the social movements in MENA were able to achieve their demands towards reformation and democratization due to the obstacles that have been mentioned in chapter three, ever since the Arab Spring. Since the Arab Spring does not have a specific leader or ideology, scholars and Middle East political experts were concerned about the factors and variables which have caused such massive demonstrations and movements in the region. Relatedly, the political consequences

of these movements were so critical that the social and political structures of the Middle East somehow have changed and have brought a chaos and instability in the region [137][138][139].

Yet, now the question is besides the nature of the MENA social movements that have been changed in the last decades, what was the reason that the Arab Spring started from Egypt and Tunisia and no other countries in the region? What features of these two states make them outliers among all other states in the region? What were the obstacles to success? Lastly, other than the main assumptions of leading mainstream theories regarding the resources and political opportunity, what other factors and variables could lead to formation of the social movements in the closed political environments?

As it mentioned in the previous chapters, there are many theories related to social movements and revolutions. However, according to Goldstones (2001)[140]. All these theories just emphasize influential factors on stability or reformations instead of analyzing the process of movements. He suggests analyzing other critical variables such as the International system (economic, ideological, and military factors); interaction between the government, elites, and civilians; social movement organization; ideology, leadership, cultural identities; gender relation, besides the structural factors.

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[137] Yadlin, Amos. *The Arab Uprising One Year On*. No. 113. INSS Memorandum, 2012.

[138] Abdullah, Abdulkhaleq. "Repercussions of the Arab Spring on GCC States." *Research Paper, Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies, Doha, Qatar* (2012).

[139] Khosrokhavar, Farhad. *New Arab revolutions that shook the world*. Routledge, 2016.

[140] Goldstone, Jack A. "Toward a fourth generation of revolutionary theory." *Annual Review of Political Science* 4, no. 1 (2001): 139-187.

Other than the mentioned factors regarding the Arab Spring, Goldstone believes that the successful revolutionary movements in the MENA were the ones which could get formed in Cross-Class coalitions and this is what happened in Tunisia, Libya, and Egypt. Although, since there is a debate on classification of the social movements in MENA under classic or new theories of social movements, Bayat (2013)[141] suggests classifying the MENA movements as "Refo-lutions". These types of movements in contrast to classic revolutionary movements happen so quickly and have a reformative, civic, and peaceful nature. Bayat argues that happenings in Tunisia and Egypt were post-Islamist movements since their demand was creating a democratic society based on justice. A society where religion and faith at the political level would combine with rights, freedom and democracy and generate a new form of government and society.

Many Middle Eastern analysts have similar viewpoints regarding the uniqueness of Middle Eastern movements. Thus, they emphasize studying various variables at different levels of analysis to have a broader and more comprehensive understanding about the MENA developments [142][143]. As such, in this regard this research in an analytical framework is going to study internal and external variables at domestic, national, and international levels. With a meta-analysis of all the previous studies, it is possible to have a comprehensive understanding about the occurrence of the Arab Spring and happenings in three countries of Egypt and Tunisia and Bahrain.

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[141] Bayat, Asef. *Life as politics: How ordinary people change the Middle East*. Stanford University Press, 2013.

[142] Syed, Maria. "Exploring the Causes of Revolutions in Tunisia and Egypt." *Middle Eastern Studies/Ortadogu Etütleri* 5, no. 2 (2014).

[143] Elhusseini, Fadi. "Post Arab Spring Thoughts: The Middle East between External and Internal Mechanisms (Political Economic & Social Forces)." *Hemispheres. Studies on Cultures and Societies* 29, no. 2 (2014): 5-29.

Thus, first we are going to review the reason behind the formation of the uprisings in these three countries and break them more through the chapter by using examples related to each variable and the present challenges in the region.

The beginning of the Tunisia uprising was related to the class division in this country. The sharp distinction between the upper and middle class manifests itself on December 17th, 2010 when a youth called Muhammad Bouazizi light himself after an altercation, he had with a security policewoman for confiscation of his food stand. He did this because he was not able to pay his tax or bribe the police. Occurrence of this happening triggered the Tunisian middle class and made them aware of the level of discrimination and inequalities in Tunisia. After this happening, the massive uprisings and street clashes started all over Tunisia. This all led to overthrown of the Bin Ali's regime on January 10th, 2011.[144]

After Tunisia, Egypt entered a cycle of mass protests. Right after the January 25th, 2011 which is the police day in Egypt a massive protest and contentious movement formed in the country and in the end, it led to overthrown of Hosni Mubarak regime on February 11th in 2011. The collapse of Bin Ali and Mubarak's regime paved the way for the public awareness and formation of political transformation in the region and other countries one by one started to join the internal war.

Sectarianism in Bahrain was the main reason behind the Bahraini dissatisfaction. The discrimination and marginalization of the Shia people which are the majority of the population in Bahrain by the ruling Khalifa family which are Sunni. The uprisings in Tunisia and Bahrain encouraged unhappy people to stand for their rights. The country faced with the unrest in February 2011. Demonstrators started to occupy Manama's Pearl Roundabout demanding

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[144] Elhusseini, Fadi. "Post Arab spring thoughts: The Middle East between external and internal mechanisms (Political economic & social forces)." *Hemispheres. Studies on Cultures and Societies* 29, no. 2 (2014): 5-29.

democracy and an end to the discrimination against the Shia Muslim by the royal family. Now, after reviewing the main cause behind the spark of the uprisings in these three countries it's time to dig in more to analyze the root causes and impactful variables that led to chaos in the region. By taking a theoretical position towards the previous studies, this research tries to gather all the mentioned variables in those studies and represents them in a macro-materialist format and in the end as contribution presents a comprehensive model for unfolding the crucial prerequisites for the formation of a fruitful movements in the MENA region.

Yet, besides the structural factors such as economic conditions, military construction, and the position of the International system towards the social movements, this research studies catalyzers such as the role of groups and media which boost the process of formation of the Arab Spring and resource mobilization.

In table 3, I gathered all the mentioned variables related to chaos and instability in MENA after reviewing 21 chosen articles.

According to table 3, scholars who did research specifically related to the Arab Spring, pointed out one or multi variables as critical and effective. The most mentioned variables which have caused chaos and instability which eventually led to occurrence of the Arab Spring are related to two different categories. One category are institutional factors and the other consists of the facilitators. Variables in institutional factors category are economic crisis, inflation, unemployment (especially among the educated youths), massive poverty, dissatisfaction among youths, social and regional inequality, corruption, struggle between the minority group and rest

Table 3. Factors Involved in Formation of the Arab Spring

Agent Type	Factors	Scholar
	Economic crisis-Unemployment (specifically among the educated youths- Inflation	Jamshidi, 2013[145]; Yadlin, 2013[146]; Dalacoura, 2012[147]; Perthes, 2012[148]; Makdisi, 2017[149]; Vengina and Ihle, 2018[150]; Elhusseini, 2014[151]; Kinninmont, 2012[152]
	Massive poverty	Kinnmont, 2012[153]; Acemoglu &Robinson, 2012[154]
Institutional Factors	Youth's dissatisfaction	Elhusseini, 2014[155]; Lynch, 2011[156]; Halaseh, 2012[157]

[145] Jamshidi, Maryam. *The future of the Arab spring: Civic entrepreneurship in politics, art, and technology startups*. Elsevier, 2013.

[146] Yadlin, Amos, and Avner Golov. *Regime stability in the middle east: An analytical model to assess the possibility of regime change*. Vol. 131. Institute for National Security Studies, 2013.

[147] Dalacoura, Katerina. "The 2011 uprisings in the Arab Middle East: political change and geopolitical implications." *International Affairs* 88, no. 1 (2012): 63-79.

[148] Perthes, Volker. *The Arab revolts in year two*. Open Democracy, 2012.

[149] Makdisi, Samir. "Reflections on the Arab uprisings." In *Combining Economic and Political Development*, pp. 22-40. Brill Nijhoff, 2017.

[150] Veninga, Willeke, and Rico Ihle. "Import vulnerability in the Middle East: effects of the Arab spring on Egyptian wheat trade." *Food security* 10, no. 1 (2018): 183-194.

[151] Elhusseini, Fadi. "Post Arab Spring Thoughts: The Middle East between External and Internal Mechanisms (Political Economic & Social Forces)." *Hemispheres. Studies on Cultures and Societies* 29, no. 2 (2014): 5-29.

[152] Kinninmont, Jane. *Bahrain: Beyond the impasse*. London: Chatham House, 2012.

[153] Ibid

[154] Acemoglu, Daron, and James A. Robinson. *Why nations fail: The origins of power, prosperity, and poverty*. Currency, 2012.

[155] Ibid

[156] Lynch, Marc. "The big think behind the Arab Spring." *Foreign Policy* 190 (2011): 46.

[157] Halaseh, Rama. "Civil society, youth and the Arab Spring." (2012).

Table 3. Continued

Agent Type	Factors	Scholar
	Social and regional inequality	Lynch, 2011[158]; Esposito et al., 2015[159]; Khosrokhavar, 2016[160]; Cammett, 2018[161]; Dalacoura, 2012[162]
	Government corruption- Corruption of leaders and their closed relatives	Acemoglu & Roninson, 2012[163]; Elhusseini, 2014[164]; Syed, 2014[165]; Marcobitz, 2014; Dalacoura, 2012[166]
	Resistance of a tyrannical minority group in response to demand for political involvement	Dalacoura, 2012[167]
	Long-term tyranny, lack of legitimacy, Systematic deterrence for reformation and attaining a new balance	Omotola, 2012;[168] Esposito et al., 2015[169]; Thyen & Gerschewski, 2018[170]; Taleb & Blythe, 2011[171]

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[158] Ibid

[159] Esposito, Voll, John L. Esposito, and John Obert Voll. *Islam and democracy*. Oxford University Press on Demand, 1996.

[160] Khosrokhavar, Farhad. *New Arab revolutions that shook the world*. Routledge, 2016.

[161] Cammett, Melani, Ishac Diwan, Alan Richards, and John Waterbury. *A political economy of the Middle East*. Hachette UK, 2015.

[162] Ibid

[163] Ibid

[164] Ibid

[165] Ibid

[166] Ibid

[167] Ibid

[168] Omotola, J. Shola. "Legitimacy crisis and 'popular uprisings' in North Africa." *Strategic Analysis* 36, no. 5 (2012): 713-719.

[169] Ibid

[170] Thyen, Kressen, and Johannes Gerschewski. "Legitimacy and protest under authoritarianism: Explaining student mobilization in Egypt and Morocco during the Arab uprisings." *Democratization* 25, no. 1 (2018): 38-57.

[171] Taleb, Nassim Nicholas, and Mark Blyth. "The black swan of Cairo: How suppressing volatility makes the world less predictable and more dangerous." *Foreign Affairs* (2011): 33-39.

Table 3. Continued

Agent Type	Factors	Scholar
Facilitators	Experience of learning and indorsing democratization and understanding of proper conditions for urban protests	Bayat, 2013[172]
	Minimum presence of NGO's and educational support networks such as "Muslim brotherhood"	Dalacoura, 2012[173]; Yadlin, 2012[174]
	The role of civil society activists	Khosrokhavar, 2016[175]

of the society for preserving the status quo, long-term tyranny, lack of legitimacy and experience of learning and endorsing democratization and waiting for the proper time to apply it. Repeatedly, facilitators consist of a minimum presence of NGOs and educational networks and civil society activists.

After reviewing the mentioned variables, we can conclude that there are four actives challenges in the MENA region. These challenges would literally cause division and breakdown in the population and would create different sub-groups. Later, these sub-groups will act against each other or they could even change to organizations or political entities.

The main conflicts which are the feature of modern Middle Eastern societies have been created around these challenges and their institutionalization. All types of societies are faced with some sort of challenges. However, the type of challenges, their density and polarization would have different impacts in social and political sectors. The MENA region is also influenced

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[172] Ibid

[173] Ibid

[174] Ibid

[175] Ibid

by the present active challenges in it and accordingly the political consequences in the region are significantly related to these challenges.

Now, I am going to review the active challenges in the dynamic region of MENA.

6.1 Secularism-Islamism

It has been more than 200 years that secularism slightly found its way through the Islamic world, specially its main sector (the Middle East) and became a dominant ideology in society and politics. Following the collapse of Othman empire in 1924 and its division to smaller kingdoms, secular governments have started to arise and rule one by one in these kingdoms. Thus, the impact of secular perspective and government was marginalizing religion, tradition, and religious authority [176].

The Western or modern definition of secularism is being against any religious authority in the society and politics, getting worthless of any tradition and acceptance of wisdom as the solitary and independent source for all the decisions related to the eternal life [177]. Appearance of secularism as a Western mentality into the Islamic World and its transformation to an ideology, created bipartisan and challenges in philosophical, social, and political processes and led to formation of two groups of supporters of secularism and Islamists [178].

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[176] DeFronzo, James. *Revolutions and revolutionary movements*. Routledge, 2018.

[177] Mahdavizadegan, Davoud. "Intrinsic Distinction of Religious and non-Religious Democracies with an Emphasis on Experiences of Democracy in Islamic Iran and West." *Journal of Islamic Revolution Studies* 11, no. 38 (2014): 159-168.

[178] Zakaria, Fareed. "Islam, democracy, and constitutional liberalism." *Political Science Quarterly* 119, no. 1 (2004): 1-20.

Other than the fundamental opposition of Islamists with secularism, one of the main catalyzers of the Islamism-Secularism gap in this region is the reaction of the Westerns to the presence of the Islamists in the social realm. Regarding to the promotion of democracy, Western countries try to be marginalized Islamists in the political sectors and political stability in this region is prior to the challenging opinion of the presence of opposition groups in the political ground. An example would be the full support of the Mubarak against the Muslim Brotherhood by the United States and Western countries, especially during the first decade of the 20th century. Put differently, promoting of the democracy by the US in Egypt was in a way that Islamic parties could not be involved in power and authority [179].

In general, the MENA region with its extraordinary characteristics, undertakes any conflicts from the tradition vs. modernity point of view. As such, it introduces secularism as the representative of modernity and Islamism as the representative of the tradition. This is what has caused two different ideological bases, one in support of secularism and the other in support of Islamism in this region which has penetrated not only in the mindset of the people, but also in all the aspects of the people's life in this sensitive part of the world. Accordingly, supporters of each side, blame the other for all the issues and lags and try to limit each other's authority. Even this challenge was clearly visible in the studied countries in this research. As various groups like the active Islamists group of Tunisia, Ennahda party[180] and Islamic Jihad or in Egypt

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[179] Brownlee, Jason. "Democratization in the Arab World? The Decline of Pluralism in Mubarak's Egypt." *Journal of democracy* 13, no. 4 (2002): 6-14.

[180] The Ennahda Movement , also known as Renaissance Party or simply Ennahda, is a self-defined "Muslim democratic political party in Tunisia. Founded as "The Movement of Islamic Tendency" in 1981, Ennahda was inspired by the Abul A'la Maududi, and Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, it has also been called "the mildest and most democratic Islamist party in history".

Jihad organization, Hizb ut Tahrir[181] and Muslim Brotherhood, and in Bahrain Al Wahdavi and Al Ekha, oversee the Islamism movement.

6.2 Economic Challenge

Among the social challenges, the economic gap is one of the most common ones. Throughout history, ideologies like communism has emerged with the claim of eradicating this gap, but apparently, they did the opposite. Although this gap exists in most of the countries, the type and distance between its poles are different in different regions and administrations. The more distance would cause several social crises. The situation is a little bit different in the MENA region and has created a complicated condition. The dual economy, besides the dual culture have led to a massive gap and the outcome is a collection of the old social classes like the nobles, petty bourgeoisies, clerics and peasants against the new social classes like, bourgeois, intellectuals and the working class. However, it should be mentioned that the role of government is significantly important in boosting or diminishing the economic polarization among the social classes or even changing its whole path.

Besides the dual economy, the other characteristic of the MENA's government is the given natural resources (gas, oil, etc.), which transform the state to a rentier state. These given natural resources would change the government to a monopole with dominant power and control which does not care about the society's benefits. However, at the same time, these types of governments try to attract and absorb elites and oppositions, by help of the money from the rents, in order to maintain their monopoly power. Rentier economy would create a rotary economy

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[181] Hizb ut-Tahrir is an international, pan-Islamist political organization which describes its ideology as Islam, and its stated aim is the re-establishment of the Islamic Caliphate to unite the Muslim community implement the Shariah, so as to then carry the proselytizing of Islam to the rest of the world

against the manufacturing economy which the main point in it is having access to the rent and competition. While in the manufacturing economy wealth is based on working and effort, in the rentier economy wealth is the product of chance, accident, family and friends' relationships and linkage to the authorities [182].

The outcome of all these characteristics would be infrastructural economic problems which would increase the gap between the rentier groups close to the regime and other parts of the society. This gap which we can call the "central gap" exists in most of the Middle Eastern countries and in the long term would create tremendous problems like unemployment, inflation, inequality and the appearance of a huge gap between wealthy and poor.

Egypt is the most populated Arabic country with a growing GDP. This growth even increased in the second half of the 2000 decade. As predicted, the constant growth of GDP in the 90s had led to decline of the unemployment rate and malnutrition of the children. However, during the first years of the new century, besides the continued GDP growth, unemployment and children's malnutrition not only stopped their decreasing process but also started to grow. Both scales had reached a critical point (malnutrition of the children from 20% to 30% and the youth's unemployment rate from 205 to 35%). That said, in some countries in the MENA region, GDP growth had a negative effect instead of being impactful on the civilian's life [183].

Inflation in Egypt has always been a structural problem. For instance, it has been more than 15% during the first decade of the 20th century and reached 18% in 2008. (UNDP, 2009).

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[182] Kouchaksaraei, Mehrzad Javadi, and Mohammad Reevany Bustami. "Structural Review of Rent Government and Its Effect on Democracy Process." *Canadian Social Science* 8, no. 6 (2012): 33-38.

[183] Springborg, Robert. "The political economy of the Arab Spring." *Mediterranean Politics* 16, no. 3 (2011): 427-433.

About 4% of the people had a salary less than $2 and around 20% of the people less than $1. The unemployment rate was 9.4 in 2009 and 9.7 in 2010 in this country. The rich class was a small part of the society with a close relationship with the authority and Mubarak's family. In fact, most people were below the poverty line, and the country was struggling with a huge economic and class gap. (Eslamee, 2016)[184]

According to the heritage foundation the economic status of this country in 2012 is as follows: Egypt's medium score of 59.1 for economic freedom is on the 96th spot among 176 present countries. Ownership status is not at a great point in this country, official corruption in the economy is also present at a high point. According to this foundation, unemployment rate in 2012 was 9.6 and inflation rate was 16.2 [185].

Tunisia is also one of the Arab-African countries that has experienced a great achievement regarding the economic scale after its independence. Relatedly, the world bank announced in 2000, Tunisia has impacted the economic improvement in the MENA region from the latest 1980s. Besides the economic development this country also impacted some corrective economic proceedings like privatization of the federal organizations, encouraging foreign investment, and cutting the subsidies during the first decade of the 21st century.

However, a deeper look at the economic status of this country could prove lots of fundamental challenges. In fact, reformations have expanded during Bin Ali's administration, but these actions doubled the economic inequality and made the poorer class's life much harder. Although, these actions created many opportunities for the upper class and even caused the

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[184] Eslamee, Saeed. "Arab Spring, Oil and probable matric of governments in Arab Middle East."(2016)

[185] Foundation, Heritage. "2017 Index of Economic Freedom: Promoting Economic Opportunity and Prosperity." (2012).

benefits directly entered to the packets of elites and few connected groups to the government

which eventually led to enlargement of the class gap and creation of distribution crisis. In other

word, reformations process caused polarization in society and expansion of inequality [186].

The class gap was so visible in this country during the decade prior to the revolution.

There was a sharp distinction between the rich class who were lived in Tunisia's suburbs and

poor class who were lived in villages and other cities suburbs. (Benstead, et al., 2013)[187]

Due to the specific attention and allocation of budget to education, the rate of graduation

was so high in Tunisian universities in comparison to other countries in the region and the

country had the highest educated youth population in the region. However, growth and education

rate were not related to the job market or human resources requirements. According to the UNDP

reports of human resource development plan in 2009, during 2005-2006, unemployment rate was

27% in Tunisia while 65% of this number were youths. According to this report, the average

unemployment rate reached from 13.6 in 1980 to 15.5 in 1990 and then to 27% in 2005-2006 [188].

According to the Heritage Foundation, Tunisia had the 100 rank in the world regarding

the economic freedom. It continues, investors are not free in this country and they do not have

any control over the credits. Business is more like a monopoly in this country and corruption in

the administrative and economic system is massive. Unemployment rate is 14.7 in this country

[189]. As for the Bahrain it is possible to argue that economy was one of the main reasons behind

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[186] Gumuscu, Sebnem. "Class, status, and party: The changing face of political Islam in Turkey and Egypt." *Comparative Political Studies* 43, no. 7 (2010): 835-861.

[187] Benstead, Lindsay J., Ellen M. Lust, Dhafer Malouche, Gamal Soltan, and Jakob Wichmann. "Winners and losers after Arab Spring." *YaleGlobal Online Magazine* (2013).

[188] Hanieh, Adam. "19. Inequalities in the Arab region." *World social science report* (2016): 101.

[189] Ibid

the people dissatisfaction of the people in Bahrain: poverty, and unemployment. Bahrain in contrast to other Middle Eastern countries is not an oil-rich country with a vast amount of oil resources (except the gifted oil from Saudi Arabia). Accordingly, they ran out of the little amount of oil they had at the beginning of 90s decade. In addition, the financial aid from the other countries, especially Saudi Arabia all goes to the ruling family. Thus, the economic situation is not preferable for the people.

The high unemployment rate has two main reasons:

1- Low level of employment

2- Massive presence of cheap imported workers in Bahrain[190]

However, despite the undesirable economic condition, the country has an economic potential and has lots of advantages for absorbing foreign capital. The special business position, aluminum industry, petroleum and petrochemical industries, and other petroleum products are the main sources of export income. In addition, this country is one of the most important communication, telecommunication in the region.

The middle-class youth and university graduates are two groups that were suffering from rising unemployment in the wake of liberal economic growth. The overall rate of unemployment before the uprisings was at 10% in Bahrain while the rate of young people was at least 25%. Moreover, the new labor market applicant just demonstrates about a third of all unemployed workers in Bahrain which is 62% and the minimum waiting time for a recent graduate to enter the job market is at least 24 months in Bahrain[191].

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[190] Fozi, Yahya. "Causes the formation and nature of political movements in Bahrain." *Life Science Journal* 9, no. 4 (2012): 3362-3365.

[191] KOSHKI, MOHAMMAD SADEGH, and MARYAM NAZEMPOUR. "A STUDY OF THE INTERNAL CHALLENGES AND OBSTACLES OF DEMOCRACY IN THE MIDDLE EAST WITH EMPHASIS ON BAHRAIN." (2011): 153-175.

It should be mentioned that Bahrain (Al Khalifa regime) has been the main ally of the Saudi Arabia among the Gulf Cooperation Council. This was a bilateral cooperation. On one side Al Khalifa regime needs Saudi Arabia support and on the other side, Al Saud needs remaining of Al Khalifa for stability of Saudi Arabia and keeping Shia's of Bahrain on the sidelines.

Therefore, the majority of Saudi Arabia's cooperation with Bahrain is economically to maintain their influence on the Bahraini regime. For instance, for keeping Bahrain under its own authority, after depletion of oil reserves in Bahrain, Saudi Arabia offered 100,000 barrels of oil to Bahrain daily. In addition, after the 1994 crisis in Bahrain, Saudi Arabia assigned the full authority of Abi Safah oil veils to Bahrain which currently Bahrain can extract and export 140,000 barrels oil from this veil daily. However, the problem is the country became completely dependent to Saudi Arabia and this caused massive dissatisfaction among the people.

6.3 Tribal and Ethnic Division

Tribal and ethnic division is one of the traditional challenges which have been presented in the societies which did not finish the civilization period completely and thus it could create the groundwork for the social conflicts. The Middle East is so influenced by this phenomenon, although the tribal and ethnic division problem is not limited to just the MENA region. During the past decades, in countries like Yugoslavia, China etc., the status of tribes and minorities has become so clear. Moreover, this is a topic that the great powers have been considering for years and even making their investments based on it.

In general, the MENA region consists of many tribes and languages, which all make this region so vulnerable. Thus, below I am going to examine this topic by reviewing four countries of Egypt, Libya, Yemen, and Tunisia.

The role of ethnic is so impactful in Egypt. In this country, Christians have chosen

migration under the influence of the Arab Nationalist governments during the past 50 years. The

number of Christians has decreased from 20% in 50 years ago to less than 10%. Christians with

10% and population about 8 million are the second largest religious group after Muslims in the

Middle East region. Although Christians are minorities in Egypt, the point is they have roots in

the Egyptian history. There were times that different administrations were trying to implement

divisive politics between Christians and Muslims in Egypt. However, during the administration

of Muhammed Ali Pasha and Jemal Abd Al Naser, we have witnessed the politics of equality

among all the Egyptians either Muslims or Christians. During the new era and administration of

Anwar Sadat, again, Egypt started to be dealing with divisive politics. As a matter of fact, the

conflicts between the Christians and Muslims were at its highest point at that time. Some

examples are bombing and firing Eyn Al Shams, Al Mina and Al Obur churches during the 1990,

1996 and 2002 years. Thus, some analysts believe that the roots of the recent uprisings and

evolutions in Egypt is related to the bombing of Iskenderian church and death of a massive

number of Christians. Put differently, these happenings created a type of convergence between

the Muslims and Christians with the goal of battling Mubarak's administration.

After Mubarak's administration, the conflicts between Christians and Muslims and

Egyptian government were still going on. Thousands of people have been killed in these battles.

Although, they announced shutting down of a church in Asvan one of the states in Egypt, there is

no doubt that there were many other reasons such as existence of lots of tribes and ethnics in

Egypt and their support for specific political groups was one of the main reasons [192] .

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[192] LaGraffe, Dan. "The youth bulge in Egypt: An intersection of demographics, security, and the Arab
Spring." *Journal of Strategic Security* 5, no. 2 (2012): 65-80.

Libya is also a tribal and traditional country. According to reports there are about 120 tribes and families in Libya with high influence in the society. Although, 30 of them are more active. Also, evidence shows that most of the wars in Libya are tribal wars [193].

After WWII, Libya gained its independence (1952), while there were no political organizations or power in the whole country. There were attempts for formation of a government under the authority of King Edris (1952-1969) based on the powerful local families and tribal structure. Due to the boom of oil, some new types of economic support started to develop separately from tribes. New center of powers started to form beside the traditional tribal and relative structure [194].

However, with Qadhafi getting to power, the tendency towards tribalism started to increase. While he was so ambivalent towards tribalism, his ideas were closer to tribalism which weakened the nature of nationalism. Ideologically, Qaddafi rejected any political role for the tribes. However, he never rejected the role of tribes themselves and was using them as facilitators of social security and source of social benefits.

Even, if the impact of any tribe lessened in 1970, tribes were still unofficially activated. As such, Qaddafi, started to support formation of new unification of tribes, especially against the big tribes in Cyrenaica which were supporter of King Edris, for protecting the revolution [195]. From the beginning of 1990, while the Islamic groups were still competing against the regime and the beginning of the international sanctions, tribes were a pressure tool for getting rid of the

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[193] Lacher, Wolfram. "Families, tribes and cities in the Libyan revolution." *Middle East Policy* 18, no. 4 (2011): 140-154.

[194] Anderson, Lisa. "Demystifying the Arab spring: parsing the differences between Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya." *Foreign Aff.* 90 (2011): 2.

[195] Kaufmann, Greg P. "DeFronzo Revolutionizing the Study of Revolutions?." *Seton Hall Journal of Diplomacy and International Relations* 16, no. 1 (2014): 173.

oppositions. Majority of the tribes were encouraged to announce statements against the people who betrayed the country. While at the beginning of 2011, tribes in north east of Cyrenaica first started to riot. On the other hand, Berber tribes from the west united rapidly and started to play an impactful military role in revolution same as the Tebu minority in south [196].

In general, the tribal and ethnic division is one of features of the Libyan society and is what have prevented this country from transforming to a united nation and instead had led the society to a tribal division in the hand of authoritarian regimes.

In this vein, the role of Qaddafi is so obvious as some who exacerbates this happening. He did this by gaining the support of some tribes and eliminating some others. Even, in the revolution in this country, this division became more obvious after the support of some of the tribes of revolution and some others of Qaddafi.

Besides the two previous countries, Yemen is also a traditional society where the behavior patterns of people are under the impact of its tribal structure. According to Burrowes (2008)[197], the remaining heritage of Yemen's independence is tribes and military which currently both organs are the foundation of this country actively and with stability. Tribes in Yemen after its independence, were always one of the powers which entered the political era along with the military powers. Moreover, their goal was either keep or change the status quo by acting against the opposition which were under the protection of other tribes. Some examples are after the independence of this country from Ottomans in coups of 1955, 1945, 1962 and 1967 [198].

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[196] Greene, Thomas H., and Joseph LaPalombara. *Comparative revolutionary movements*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1974.

[197] Burrows, Robert D., and Catherine M.Kasper. "The Salih regime and the need for a credible opposition. "The *Middle East Journal* 61, no.2 (2007):263-280
[198] Fattah, Khaled. "A political history of civil-military relations in Yemen." *Alternatif Politika* 2, no. Special (2010): 25-47.

Tribes play an impactful role in Yemen. They were always one of the incompatible powers against the foreign intervention, like the resistance of the tribes against the England colonization. On the other hand, these tribes were tools for influence of other countries like Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia has an old and traditional relation with Yemeni tribes and supports them financially and with weaponry.

Since 1962, Saudi Arabia has been trying to control Yemen with a tribal republic that has a weak political structure but at the same time, strong tribal structure. According to Burrowes, the most important outcome of the Saudi Arabia's strategy against Yemen is spreading tribalism in all the organizations, especially the military. Accordingly, this tribalism was more beneficial for northern tribes and not the southern ones[199]. The dominance of the tribal beliefs and ideas on the society's culture is what would create internal ethnic and tribal conflicts. Sometimes as a matter of tribal conflicts regarding a piece of land or social issues, business or etc., or even personal issues, in the case of tribal killings; And this would lead to tribal killings. Head of the tribes believe that these happenings are all the result of lack of law, weakness of justice and dominance of tribal beliefs. (Aliboni, 2011)[200]. This situation would also decrease the government's authority at national level and increase the influence of the tribal leaders in the political structure.

Saleh's regime was one of the regimes after the 1962 revolution, which actively was trying to empower the political power of the tribes and support them. According to Khaled, this behavior could increase the gap between the ethnics and tribes and put them against each other.

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[199] *Burrows, Robert D. The Yemen Arab Republic: The Politics of Development*, 1962-1986. Routledge, 2016

[200] Aliboni, Roberto. "The international dimension of the Arab Spring." *The International Spectator* 46, no. 4 (2011): 5-9.

On top of that, the presence of the Zaidi Shias and Houthi's tribal rebellions might be the most challenging outcomes of the ethnic and tribal division in the Middle East.

Tunisia, similarly, to other Middle Eastern countries in regards to ethnicity, has a heterogeneous society. Although it does not have a sharp ethnic division in comparison to the other Middle Eastern countries, since it was the destination of many immigrants throughout history, it has ethnic diversity. Although the majority of Tunisian are Arabs and Sunni (99%) but according to the genetic research, the ethnic population of Tunisia is not homogenous and is a combination of various races that migrate to North of Africa, from Asia and Europe. As such, people who live in North of Tunisia are a mixture of Barbarians, Roman, Vandals, Cartagena, and Arabs. While the people in middle and south parts of Tunisia are more Barbarians. In fact, a complex of various ethnics with different cultures are living together, that due to the traditional pattern of the society, have divergence potential [201]. In a nutshell, the current Middle East looks like a 40-piece ball, that each of its countries are influenced by their ethnic divisions, and in between, the unreasonable actions of the governments would sharpen the gap and create severe polarization.

Among all the involved countries in the Arab Spring the case of Bahrain is unique regarding the sectarianism and ethnic division. On one side there is a sharp discrimination between the Al Khalifa family and their relatives with the rest of the society and on the other side the widespread religious discrimination between the Shia and Sunnis. While the majority of the country are Shia (60%), the ruling family are Sunni. There are two divided society in Bahrain: one is the society of rich ruling family, diplomates, business owners and the other one the poor society which contains people in poor neighborhoods and suburbs. Al Khalifa family members

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[201] Ajami, Fouad. "The Arab Spring at one: a year of living dangerously." *Foreign Affairs* (2012): 56-65.

are always prior to others and there is not such a thing as meritocracy. Additionally, in the Bahrain society the distinction against the Bahraini Shias is the point which they were always under the discriminatory behavior and being marginalized by the ruling system. This in fact has caused a serious dissatisfaction for the Bahraini Shias which are the majority of the society.

6.4 The Administrative Challenge

One of the most impactful challenges on the political culture of the Middle East is the presence of the military in the political arena of the countries of this region. The special privileges of the military members in politics and the fear of occurrence and formation of a coup in these countries, have made the process of democratization problematic. Moreover, because the existence of a complete democracy in a country has a negative relationship with the reduced military's power, the political process of this region, has been moving towards an incomplete democracy during the 20th century and the first decade of 21st century [202].

This challenge has created a vicious loop in the domestic politics of Middle Eastern countries, which by moving of the military towards the political arena, the half space of the civil society gets closed and with the moving of civilians towards taking this position back, the military members are driven back to the camps and military centers. This process is what is happening in most Middle Eastern countries.

There are various arguments about the presence of the military in the political arena. Jowitz believes that interference of the military is one cause of political instability. The more military intervention, the more political instability. On the other hand, Huntington and Pearl

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[202] Lotfian, Saideh. "A regional security system in the Persian Gulf." In *Security in the Persian Gulf*, pp. 109-134. Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2002.

Muter argue that the formation of institutions (partisans, legislative parliaments) would reduce military intervention. Huntington by arguing about the excessive or abusive political influences of the armed forces in a country states that, praetorianism is one of the features of a country that not only the military but also other social members intervene in the political affairs. The reasons that pushed the military towards political intervention are hidden in the society's structure. These reasons are mostly related to the lack of weakness of the political organizations [203].

The presence of the military in the political arena has a long history. However, this specific status of military in MENA forms as a matter of the role of military in independence and government building in these countries. The military leaders of Egypt (1952) and Libya (1969) took power by coup d'état. Although, what is clear is that in majority of the MENA countries, the military is loyal to the regime instead of the nation or the democratic system [204].

In Egypt, among the 18 cabinets which had formed during the 1952-1970 years, only leaders of one of the administrations which remained less than 2 months were not military members. Only 3% of the first cabinet consisted of non-military officials and the next 15 cabinets were all combinations of about 36% military and 64% civilians. Accordingly, the most critical positions offered to the military members. Naser was chosen for leadership 8 times and all the president's deputies during Sadat and Naser's administration were military members. Enterprises of all the major ministries and presses like Al Ahram or Al Helal were in the hands of the military members. According to Carothers, 2002, Egypt entered a gray political zone after the 90s which its main features were a limited political space for different parties and the civil society's institutions, lack of public trust to the government, repeated abuse of law by the

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[203] Ibid

[204] Keaney, Thomas, and Barry Rubin, eds. Armed Forces in the Middle East: politics and strategy. Routledge, 2013.

government, supporting of the weak organizations by the government and political interfering of the armed forces [205].

The presence of the armed forces in the political arena and the military-civil society gap is clearly visible in the recent years in Libya. The way that Qaddafi took power, and the way he treated the military during his administration, all show the bold role of the military and armed forces in the society and lack of even half-space civil society in this country. He owed his power in Libya to the military's 1969 coup. In this year, some of the military officials ousted Edris by the order of Muammar Qaddafi who was 27 at that time, and later formed Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya [206]. During his administration there was no civil society. The political system of Libya at his time instead of relying on the civil society, parties, groups, and political institutions was based on the military and tribal support, completely authoritarian. Formation of parties and civil society was forbidden, and oppositions got suppressed by the military[207]. He was so against the civilian organizations, which he believed regarding the parliaments that it is a hoax against the nation and the parliament regimes are using cheating tricks for solving the democracy problem. Moreover, regarding the public elections he believed that it is a trick and something like a modern dictatorship [208].

Qaddafi, with all these assumptions, started to exclude all the opposition groups and other civil groups by help of the military and armed forces during the 1980-1990. The role of security

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[205] Carothers, Thomas. "The end of the transition paradigm." *Journal of democracy* 13, no. 1 (2002): 5-21.

[206] Fraihat, Ibrahim. *Unfinished revolutions: Yemen, Libya, and Tunisia after the Arab spring.* Yale University Press, 2016.

[207] Garwood-Gowers, Andrew. "The responsibility to protect and the Arab Spring: Libya as the exception, Syria as the norm." *UNSWLJ* 36 (2013): 594.

[208] Ibid

powers was so bold in excluding the civil groups in Libya, that they sometimes traveled abroad to eliminate opposition forces. In the meantime, what is visible in Libya after Qaddafi more than the previous administration, is the increased role of armed forces and decreased security after the revolution. As such, it is possible to argue that this is what led to sidelining of civil society, or in other words, under shadowed it by growth of the military after the revolution.

In Tunisia, the role of the military for domestic security and elimination of the political opposition groups was so critical from the independence of this country till 2011. The military was the main trustworthy organization and was the perfect tool for political manipulation and advancement of the authoritarian regime's goals. The political manipulation of the military became clear, particularly during the first decade of 1970, with suppressing the anti-government demonstrations. Since the officials of this country had no role in the government formation or the independence movement, like the leaders of the neighbor countries, they did not have a charismatic image and thus, were so dependent on the military. The military from the end of 1970 and the beginning decade of 1980 tried to suppress all the unions and Islamic groups with the help of security forces.

On the other hand, Bin Ali's kind of coming to power in Tunisia, clearly shows the impactful role of the military in the political arena. He took power in 1978 by help of the military and coup d'état and by ousting Habib Bu Raghibeh, the first Tunisian leaders after the independence. Due to his security background and support of the military for taking the power, during his 23 years of authoritarian rule, he let the armed forces and security forces occupied all the positions and departments,

Although, after taking power, he announced that he will decrease the political role of the military, will put the armed forces under the order of non-military forces and will create some

reformations, during his administrations he could not fight against the massive influence of the military. As such, the military and armed forces suppressed many of the civilian forces like the Islamists, the liberals and unions and forced them to abandon the country.

Bin Ali believed himself as a civil reformer, while under his administration none of the lefties or Islamists had any rights and were under attack frequently [209]. Moreover, the government was under the order of the military and based on their demands was violating the citizen's rights, limiting freedom of speech, presses and communications by using force and fear tackles. A set of actions like the judiciary system, traveling controls, arbitrary arrests for weakening the human rights and apposition groups in the end caused the Amnesty international organization to accuse Bin Ali's regime for human rights violation in 2010. (U.S State Department, 2010)

The West's support of the military of this country had a massive impact on the human rights violation and decrease of the civil freedoms and elimination of the civil institutions. Tunisia was among the 10 countries that was on the top of the US's list of sale of military weapons after 2002 for preventing terrorisms. The United States named this country during the Bin Ali's administration as a key country for preventing terrorism. Supplies and facilities which the U.S gave to Tunisia since 2003, all display the growth of militarism and the increased role of the military in politics, especially the civil arena. The U.S sale of military weapons to Tunisia was consist of helicopter, machine gun, parachute, body armor, night vision device for snipers, drone and etc. [210].Tunisia was among the 20 countries which has received international military

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[209] Nassif, Hicham Bou. "A MILITARY BESIEGED: THE ARMED FORCES, THE POLICE, AND THE PARTY IN BIN (ALI'S TUNISIA, 1987-2011." *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 47, no. 1 (2015): 65.

[210] Arieff, Alexis, and Carla E. Humud. *Political transition in Tunisia*. Vol. 15. Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 2011.

education since 1994. In addition, the amount of the funds for the U.S military aid to Tunisia

2008 was 21500 million and in 2009 was more than 23800 million dollars. (DSCA, 2011)

In 2003, Tunisian parliament passed the inclusive anti-terrorism law. After passing this

law, about 2000 people arrested for terrorism. These actions caused the critics to argue that

demanded freedom is equal to terrorism in this country [211].

In general, during the 23 years of Bin Ali's administration, the civil society got destroyed step by

step by the armed and security forces. The parties, NGOs and various medias were

overshadowed by the armed forces activities and the military was suppressing any democracy

process by calling it terrorism.

The position of the military in Yemen is related to the critical role of its members during

the independence of the country from the ottoman. In Yemen, the regime was on the one hand

dependent on the military for maintaining itself and on the other hand was worried about the

coup d'état from the military side.

The weak economy, the tribal and torn structure and the weakness of the organizations all

were amplified the need for the military to deal with the society [212].The growth of the military at

the beginning of the independence, led to occurrence of continued coups in the next decades and

transformed the country to a country which uses military response for any democratic political

actions and elimination or suppression for any civil movements. The continued coups in Yemen

all prove the dominance of the military in the political arena and the weakness of the civil

organization in leading the social and political processes. The set of formed coups in Yemen

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[211] Kinsman, Jeremy. "Democracy rising Tunisia and Egypt, when idealists got it right." *Policy Options* (2011).

[212] Colton, Nora Ann. "Yemen: A collapsed economy." *The Middle East Journal* 64, no. 3 (2010): 410-426.

displays the sharp gap between the military and the civil society and in general dominance of the military on all the social aspects. Examples are the 1948 coup which led to assassination of Imam Yahya by an Iraqi. Later, Abdullah Bin Ahmed became the leader. On the side, Imam Yahya's son in response to the 1948 coup, entered Sana'a and executed all the people involved in the coup by help of his tribal supporters. Again, an unsuccessful coup happened in 1955 by Al Talayeh, which happened again in 1962 by Abdullah Salih by help of the Egyptian forces. The outcome was the end of Imam Ahmed regime and the start of Yemen republic system by Abdullah Saleh [213].

After the withdrawal of the Egyptian forces from Yemen, there was another coup by the tribes' leaders and the military against Abdullah Saleh in 1967 which led to ousting of Saleh and Ghazi Alriani the only non-military leader of Yemen took power. However, as a matter of another coup in 1974, Ibrahim Al Hamdi took power. He was a military guy with modern beliefs which was insisting on marginalizing the tribal forces and improvement of independence of national sovereignty. He believed that the military is only a national organization. As such, he started to eliminate all the tribe's leaders. After 3 years he got killed by the Saudi Arabia's order and the military took the control of capital. After the alliance of both north and south Yemen and formation of the current Yemen, the first president was again chosen from the military members. This was again the beginning of the conflicts between the southern and northern forces [214].

As for Bahrain, since the country was so weak regarding the military defense and security, it was obliged to make military agreement with superpowers. One of the most important

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[213] Orkaby, Asher. *Beyond the Arab Cold War: The International History of the Yemen Civil War, 1962-68*. Oxford University Press, 2017.

[214] Knights, Michael. "The military role in Yemen's protests: civil-military relations in the tribal republic." *Journal of Strategic Studies* 36, no. 2 (2013): 261-288.

ones was the military agreement with the United Sates and offering the Al Jafr military base to the United States in 1971. This base was built by English people in 1935 and after they exit it was given to the United Sates in 1971. Other than that, the United State has two more military bases in Bahrain, and for this reason thousands of American soldiers are living in Bahrain with their families. All these are the reasons behind the separation of military and the civil society in Bahrain and Bahraini people's dissatisfaction.

However, what is worth mentioning is the military's intervention is what is destructive in the MENA region. According to Huntington it is a preventive interference. He argues, there are two types of military interference. The first one happens at the times when the matter is the potential or close winning of a party or a movement in election or when the winning party is the representative of a group which the military wants to keep away from the political arena. The second one happens when a regime starts performing radical policies or relies on groups which the military does not want them to become powerful [215].
However, eliminating the civil society and parties and organization, is the outcome of the military's activities in the Middle East.

Yet, this research aims to suggest a new model by presenting other impactful factors regarding the proper way of analyzing MENA movements and revolutions. Thus, a multi-level and multi-variable analysis is what will be used in this research to analyze happenings and reforms in Tunisia and Egypt which were the initiators of the recent movements in the MENA region and were successful in achieving their demands for the time. Theoretically, this research will use a macro and materialist approach for analyzing the conditions which the Arab Spring

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[215] Huntington, Samuel P. *The third wave: Democratization in the late twentieth century*. Vol. 4. University of Oklahoma press, 1993.

occurred in. The mentioned approach will put "political process theory" and "resource mobilization theory" at the center of analysis.

This research theoretically believes that Tunisia and Egypt had similar structural conditions which at a historical moment and as a matter of one or multi catalyzers led to the street protests. These street protests were strengthened by facilitators and formed an uprising movement and eventually with the help of some key determinant factors the reformation occurred. The used variables in the analysis will be mentioned shortly. However, the case was different for Bahrain. In the next chapter we are going to point out to the obstacles of Bahrain success.

CHAPTER 7

ANALYTICAL APPROACH

My research is based on a comparative case-centered method. With this method, I am going to analyze political, economic, social, cultural, military, and international factors involved in the occurrence of the Arab Spring. The combination of these factors is what is important in the positive or negative outcome. Relatedly, these factors all have impacts on each other positively or negatively.

The main hypothesis for selecting these three cases is that the presence of some similarities between Tunisia and Egypt has caused these two countries to become starting points of the Arab Spring and not the other countries in the MENA region. Accordingly, Bahrain is chosen as an unsuccessful case with some unique features which this combination would be helpful in generating the most impactful variables on variation of the social movement outcomes in MENA. As for the cases, with the help of the results of chart 1, the similarities between three countries will be reviewed. Moreover, I have added 9 more factors which I found critical in causing and evolving the Arab Spring will be discussed in detail. As for the institutional factors other than the studied variables in the previous research related to the Middle East, I have added 4 more variables.

For facilitators I studied the role of labor unions and NGOs along with the role of culture and social media. Moreover, I added another category of determiners, factors which in my opinion could have a significant impact on determining the direction of the MENA social movements. They are the leader's performance at times of crisis, police forces and military position and lastly the foreign intervention.

- Institutional Factors:

1- Clash between expectations and reality

2- Public's distrust in government

3- Sedimentation of the present ideology

4- Social, political, and economic instability

- Facilitators:

5- The role of oppositions

6- Role of culture and social media

- Determiners:

7- Leader's performance at the times of crisis

8- Police forces and military position

9- The foreign intervention

Thereafter, the correlation between the mentioned variables will be examined by help of the selected cases of Tunisia, Egypt, and Bahrain and later the results will be stated.

7.1 Institutional Factors

7.1.1 Clash Between Expectations and Reality

One thing that became a critical issue in Tunisia and Egypt in long term was feeling of humiliation and relative inequality[216]. "Enough" movement occurred as a matter of reaching serious proportions of handling problems and chaos all over the society and also the "Dignity" movement was a result of humiliation feeling among the people. People were annoyed since they have not had a proper answer to their needs and demands in the recent decades. Moreover, the

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[216] Fargues, Philippe. "Mass Migration and Uprisings in Arab Countries: An Analytical Framework." In *Combining Economic and Political Development*, pp. 170-183. Brill Nijhoff, 2017.

international system did not treat them well as a Muslim or Arab specifically after the September 11th incident [217][218][219].

Regarding the poor economy as one of the critical structural factors of the Arabic revolutions it should be stated that although during the years prior to the Arab Spring, Tunisia and Egypt both had experienced economic development [220], but the level of relative deprivation and dissatisfaction among the youth have been increased between 2009-2010 years and thus, the level of their happiness has been decreased [221]. Relatedly, during the years prior to the revolution, there was no increase in national income in these countries by means of better split of the incomes as a result of increased poverty level due to the massive corruption and social inequality in the society [222][223][224].

According to the Gallup survey, the number of people who felt prosperous and lucky in 2010 in Tunisia and Egypt decreased in comparison to 2007. In addition, the lowest level of

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[217] Behr, T., and M. Aaltola. "The Arab Uprising. Causes." *Prospects and Implications. FIIA Briefing Paper* 76 (2011).

[218] Aliboni, Roberto. "The international dimension of the Arab Spring." *The International Spectator* 46, no. 4 (2011): 5-9.

[219] Ibid

[220] Ibid

[221] *Zgurić, Borna. "Challenges for democracy in countries affected by the 'Arab Spring'." Islam and Christian–Muslim Relations23, no. 4 (2012): 417-434.*

[222] Chandy, Laurence. "Reframing development cooperation." *Global Economy and Development* 3 (2011).

[223] Ibid

[224] Ibid

satisfaction was related to these two countries beside Syria, Morocco, and Yemen among the Arabic countries in the Middle East. (Amin et al., 2012)[225]

As such, it is possible to argue that the formation of the protests was for purposes like maintaining dignity, justice, and elimination of deprivation [226][227].

In a nutshell, it is fair to argue that a combination of factors like political limitations, lack of freedom, long experience of economic pressure with increased relative deprivation feeling and formation of corrupt regime mindset, among the people, were all created the foundation of a considerable controversy.

7.1.2 Public's Distrust in Government

As much as the importance of people's basic rights, feeling of freedom and the benefits of citizenship rights are significant too. Having a full stomach, without feeling free would lead to dissatisfaction. That is why many believe that putting legitimate freedoms in danger, in the end would jeopardize livelihood in the society [228]. The turning point was the time when people became aware of the corruption of the officials. The gap between rich and poor was increasing. People started to believe that officials only cared about their own benefits and just used people as a tool for reaching their own targets. Presence of defiance potential, humiliation and feelings of deprivation reached the point that the corrupted image of leaders like Ben Ali, Mubarak,

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[225] Ibid

[226] Bayat, Asef. *Life as politics: How ordinary people change the Middle East*. Stanford University Press, 2013.

[227] Saikal, Amin, and Amitav Acharya, eds. *Democracy and reform in the Middle East and Asia: Social protest and authoritarian rule after the Arab Spring*. Bloomsbury Publishing, 2013.

[228] Tavakkoli, Tabasi Ali, Farangis Mansoori, Mohammad Taghi Rezaei, and Tavakkol Habibzadeh. "Third-Party States Responsibility Arising from Violations of International Humanitarian Law in International Armed Conflicts (With A Brief Analysis of The Crisis in Syria)." 61-96.

Gadhafi, Assad's family and Ali Abdullah Saleh shaped in public minds and people started

blaming them for mishandling the political power and fraud. Yet, this was not far from the

reality.

     As for Ben Ali, according to wiki leaks in 2006, about half of the Tunisian business elites

were in direct contact with Ben Ali himself. In addition, "The family" in the political culture of

Tunisia was known as a financial network which was family based, Ben Ali's 3 oldest sons, 7

grandkids and 10 brothers in law [229]. This situation was ongoing, while the unemployment rate

Table 4. Middle Eastern Countries with Highest Corruption Perceptions Index Rate

Country	Corruption Perceptions Index (%) (2011)
Bahrain	51
Tunisia	41
Egypt	32
Syria	26
Libya	21
Yemen	15

Source : https://www.transparency.org/en/cpi/2019/results/table

among the Arab youths during 2005-2010 was 25% which is one the highest rates in the world

[230].

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[229] Ibid

[230] Makdisi, Samir. "Reflections on the Arab uprisings." In *Combining Economic and Political Development*, pp. 22-40. Brill Nijhoff, 2017.

According Banaszak[231], successful revolutionary movements are usually those which form cross class coalitions. Regarding the political structure in Tunisia and Egypt and the role of government in economy and society, during the uprisings lower- and middle-class people mobilized against the government and religious leaders and intellectuals joined them. Massive corruption and bribery of the government and related officials were always presence (Acemoglu & Robinson, 2012)[232]. Despite the massive poverty in Tunisia and Egypt, the judiciary and people were always among the accusers [233]. Mubarak, however, lost the support of most classes except a part of the upper class. Moreover, after the self-immolation of Bouazizi[234], many people started blaming Ben Ali and his relatives.

Mubarak and Ben Ali at the beginning of 2011, saw themselves completely alone in front of the wave of revolutionaries since their social support was just limited to a small part of the society. Bahrain has a long history of government's fake promises to Bahraini people. In 2001 the king promised to respond to the oppositions demands in a referendum. However, the king reneged his promises. Again in 2002 he announced a new constitution in which he centralized power in his hands. Although this constitution brought parliament to Bahrain but at the same time it manipulated the system. It literally manipulated the constituencies, so that the opposition votes were somehow trifling. In other words, the parliament made the king's existing power a triple veto system. Later, the government naturalized large numbers of poor Sunni Arabs from Syria, Jordan, and Yemen in order to marginalize the Shias of the country which were 70% of

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[231] Banaszak, Lee Ann. *Why movements succeed or fail: Opportunity, culture, and the struggle for woman suffrage.* Vol. 52. Princeton University Press, 1996.

[232] Ibid

[233] Ibid

[234] Worth, Robert F. "How a single match can ignite a revolution." *New York Times* 21 (2011).

the population. Accordingly, they hired lots of non-Bahraini people for creating a secret army to be prepared for future challenges. As the years went by the political naturalization decision of the government created serious negative impacts such as unemployment, increased sense of xenophobia among Bahrainis and higher demands for homes and essential needs which were already far from reach of the working class.

Additionally, lots of the king's family controversies began to leak to the public. The most scandalous one was related to the transaction between the prime minister and a businessman. When all these happening became public knowledge people realized the government has no intention in in reforming the rigged political system. The happenings strengthened the distrust of people in their own government and a lot of anger and annoyance began building up which eventually, sparked the unrests for standing against the government to achieve the old demands. However, after the occurrence of the unrests, the protesters were suppressed by security guards and the secret army in March 2011 when the king declared a state of emergency. He brought troops from Sunni-led neighbor countries to restore order and silent dissent. The uprisings led to death of at least 30 civilians and 5 policemen, and arrestment of about 3000 people.

7.1.3 Sedimentation of the Present Ideology

Political ideology like any other novel social phenomena after becoming institutionalized could lose its influence and inspiration in time. Thus, all the efforts for preserving it could be impractical. This is what Edmond Husserl calls "Sedimentation". Put differently, sedimentation occurs while a social phenomenon, belief or ideology turn into an unchanging routine and do not trigger any sensation [235].

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[235] Sayyid, Salman. *A fundamental fear: Eurocentrism and the emergence of Islamism*. Zed Books Ltd., 2015.

At the time of sedimentation, the current ideology would be at a point where there is no practical action against or in support of it. As such, the ruling system would try to preserve the status quo outside that ideology by help of tools like force, violence, or any other mechanism. At this phase, the ruling system would be in danger since its ideology will lose its resource mobilization power and the regime's strength for confronting the internal and external threats will decrease.

It seems that during the recent decades, especially after the Camp David treaty on Sep17th 1987, Arab nationalism ideology entered the sedimentation phase. In fact, during the last decades, rulers of states like Egypt that were mobilizing by relying on Israel, Arab unity, and nationalism in order to convince people to support them, have lost their former strengths and tools.

Additionally, the collapse of Iraqi Ba'athist regime in 2003 and the beginning of the proxy wars in the region in which Iran and Saudi Arabia were the main players of it, have lessened the strength of Arab nationalism and impacted religion and sectarianism. One of the critical weaknesses of the Ben Ali and Mubarak regimes was the lack of religious and ideological backup in the absence of legitimacy and democratic mechanisms. With the start of intense street conflicts in Egypt and Tunisia between the people and government forces at the pick of legitimacy crisis, no one had the ideological power to defend any of these two and there was no volunteer for sacrificing his life, social and economic benefits for Ben Ali or Mubarak. Ben Ali was not able to count on anyone's ideological commitment and no one was there for Mubarak after he got ousted and feared to remain in the country.

Generally, it is fair to argue that the ruling ideology in Tunisia and Egypt by no means was tied to religious and fundamental values of the society. Clerics and religious leaders either

joined people in the movements or at least did not defend the government. In Tunisia, religious group of Al-Nahza by Ghannouchi leadership and in Egypt Muslim Brotherhood supported the revolution and later Salafist groups also joined them.

7.1.4 Social, Political and Economic Instability

Tunisia and Egypt both have an ***economy*** based on tourism. As such, any chaos and insatiability in these countries would affect the number of tourists and the government's revenues. At the time of instability, the maintenance fee of the political system would increase, and the government would not be able to resist so long against the reformation waves. The reason is these types of regimes do not have enough financial resources for keeping the military, security, and enforcement forces in the scene. Moreover, they would face difficulty in paying the government employees which could also impact dissatisfaction. This scenario is different in the rentier states.

During the instabilities known as the Arab Spring, Saudi Arabia injected funds to various sectors of society, gave benefits to employees, increased the amount of loans, hired about 60,000 new forces to the Ministry and assured construction of 500,000 houses for poor people, and as a result not only ran-away from the contentious cycle but also guaranteed its own security [236][237]. This was exactly what Mubarak and Ben Ali's regimes were deprived of.

In fact, the chaos was originating from the non-oil states. It is thus apparent that during the crisis, most of the time, countries benefited from their economic strengths. Oil-rich countries

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[236] Abdullah, Abdulkhaleq. *Repercussions of the Arab Spring on GCC States*. Arab Center for Research & Policy Studies., 2012.

[237] MacFarquhar, Neil. "Protesters Scold Egypt's Military Council." *The New York Times* 1 (2011).

like Algeria, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and Oman were able to silent the protests by increasing

employee's income, creating new job positions, increasing subsidies and cash payment to

citizens. This was the crucial point of the remaining of the Persian gulf's oil-rich kingdoms [238].

The only exception among the oil-rich countries was Gadhafi's regime which could not

use oil revenue for calming down the mounting protests. The overthrow of Gadhafi's regime

with oil resources backup, occurred with the NATO air coverage and international interventions

[239].

Another point worth mentioning is that authoritarian countries which have an economy

based on tourism should have an interaction with the rest of the world and adopt less strict social

and cultural rules inside the country. Also, they must provide more facilities for the entrance and

departure of the tourists and be more flexible. In this situation, it is possible that police strength

and suppression power decreased and the setting for formation of popular uprising became

necessary. In this regard, Tunisia and Egypt which were in good terms with other countries

especially the United States and Israel, could not reach the same level of suppression power

against the contentious potential as Iraq at the time of Saddam or Libya and Syria. This was one

of the critical reasons that the Arab Spring had started from Tunisia and Egypt and no other

states in the region.

In fact, the level of a country's dependence to revenues and economic resources outside

of the country could impact the government's performance. For instance, many Egyptian

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[238] Ibid

[239] Aydin, Aydın. "Hereditary Oil Monarchies: Why Arab Spring Fails in GCC Arabian States?." *SDU Faculty of Arts and Sciences, Journal of Social Sciences* 30 (2013): 123-138.

workers are working near the Persian Gulf and sending tremendous amounts of money back home [240].

Prior to 2011, this issue caused banning of countries which were struggling with economic crisis from this privilege, in order to show severity of action against the platforms like "Aljazeera" and "Al Arabia" which were supported by Qatar and Saudi Arabia's administrations.

At this point, it is not even possible to tolerate foreign interventions while a part of the government's authority in managing the country and preserving the status quo is based on foreign revenues. Thus, the government had no other choice to deal with the interferers and even sometimes asks for their support. So, it is apparent why Ben Ali ran to the Saudi Arabia and during the crisis Mubarak also got an offer to move to the Saudi Arabia with his family. Regarding the impact of foreign financial resources, we can point out to the effect of foreign loans on the political stability of Ben Ali and Mubarak's regimes. In 2010, Egypt was the biggest foreign assistance receiver for investment in trade division after India and Afghanistan. Relatedly, 70% of the mutual assistance and 40% of the whole foreign assistance was related to the United States and Germany. Later, Tunisia and Egypt started increasing taxes to pay for their debts, which was an extra pressure on society. (UN, 2012)

According to Smith, (2011) 68.7% of the whole foreign assistance money was related to the United States itself. He argues that there was a close relationship between the US military. In addition, the US had a great political influence on both Egypt and Tunisia. This could be self-explanatory that while the US government and president demand change of Mubarak, the process of power change has happened much faster.

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[240] Monitor, Middle East. "Arab Spring One Year On: Assessing the Transition." *Economic Outlook, The Gulf, April. Available on: www. meamonitor. com* (2012).

Regarding the ***Social factors, many of*** the MENA states were struggled with social matters like population growth, the ratio of youth's number to the whole population, social gap, discrimination, and corruption [241]. These issues were the most important factors for the public's dissatisfaction with the system. Majority of these countries have ethnic or religious minorities or there is a social gap in the society for sectarian reasons.

Thus, Middle Eastern states which experienced a significant gap between majorities and minorities were on more of a favorable ground and got involved with the wave of opposition protests earlier [242]. In Syria, Saudi Arabia and Libya part of the society that believed were victims of discrimination occupied the streets.

However, the interesting point is that revolutionary movements were successful in those states with less heterogeneous and unified populations. Relatedly, the success achievement was much faster in states with more unified populations and less religious and ethnic social differences. Tunisia which was the first state in the Middle East that witnessed the first victory has a more homogeneous population in comparison to Yemen which was the last one [243].

The fact is, in the Middle Eastern states with a significant gap between minorities and majorities, the governments- either from the majorities or minorities have seen more resistance and were able to preserve the status quo until now; Although this resistance which is based on the government's dependence on the minorities, seems fragile.

The social gap has caused by one group assumes their interest is dependent on upholding the status quo. Thus, they support the system until the last minute with the help of the military

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[241] Ajami, Fouad. "The Arab Spring at one: a year of living dangerously." *Foreign Affairs* (2012): 56-65.

[242] Anderson, Lisa (May/June 2011), "Demystifying the Arab Spring", Foreign Affairs, Vol. 90, Issue 3

[243] Ibid

(which recruits most of its members from the same group). This was the case in Syria and Bahrain. In contrast, in Tunisia and Egypt, massive protests formed among various social classes against the government. In these two countries the social gap was not significant, and no group had specific ties or interests in the government, no group considered itself as a loser in the fall of the regime [244].

7.2 Facilitators

7.2.1 The Role of Culture and Social Media

One factor that played a critical role in creation of the domino effect in the Arab Spring was culture. Following the protests in Tunisia and inspired by them, opposition in some African countries like Djibouti and Uganda, Asian countries like Maldives, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, even China and European countries such as Albania, Croatia and Spain started some protests against their governments. None of them were able to be continuous like the Tunisian movement. The fact is, the Arab Spring wave which began with the overthrow of Ben Ali only occurred in the Middle Eastern countries which was the outcome of the presence or formation of a united culture and identity that was facilitating uprisings from on Arabic country to another. (Lynch, 2011)[245]

After the success of the Tunisian people in ousting their ruler, people in other Middle Eastern states assumed they would be able to do so as well. Similar slogans illustrate the impact of this shared cultural factor. However, the feeling of a shared identity during the 2011 to 2013 events was different from the Arabism in the 1960 decade with the leadership of Jamal

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[244] Dalacoura, Katerina. "Turkey, Iran and the Arab uprisings: the failure of political Islam and post-ideological politics." *Political Reflection Magazine* 2, no. 4 (2012): 68-73.
[245] Lynch, Marc. "After Egypt: The limits and promise of online challenges to the authoritarian Arab state." Perspectives on politics (2011): 301-310.

Abdunnassir. The demand was not changing the political borders of the region and formation of a united Arab country; Besides, instead of pointing to foreigners and international powers, it was targeting rulers of the Arab's world itself [246].

Relatedly, regarding the sub-Arabic cultures, countries with most comparable cultures had a significant impact on each other. For instance, Tunisia, Egypt and Libya which were the outliers in the protests, were neighbors and shared same north African Arabic sub-culture. (Gregg, 2005)[247]. Regarding the culture, another important factor was ***the role of technology and social media***. Television channels like Al -Jazeera[248] , social media platforms like Facebook, Tweeter, YouTube, and cellphones all played key roles in the occurrence of the Arab movements.

Many scholars argue that, factors such as discrimination, social injustice, political autocracy, poverty, and economic inefficiency were always presence in the region. However, the new factors which worked as facilitators were technology and social media [249].

Regarding the impact of the internet and social media as a tool for social movement mobilization there are two different arguments. Some scholars like Lerner emphasize the negative impacts of the internet on the social movements. They believe that publishing and distributing information through the internet would not create enough social capital and social bonding for constant social movements on the path of democratization. In contrast, the public

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[246] Ibid

[247] Gregg, Gary S. *The Middle East: a cultural psychology*. Oxford University Press, 2005.

Regarding the role of Al-Jazeera Tv channel check this article:
[248] Abdelmoula, Ezzeddine. "Al-Jazeera's Democratizing Role and the Rise of Arab Public Sphere." (2012).

[249] ibid

access to the online information that is generated from the non-accurate, non-organized and outspread sources, could only cause confusion. Moreover, replacement of the virtual world with the real world and face to face interaction could slow down the process of cohesion and mobilization which is important for any social movement.

Although, Lerner believes that the combination of the internet and social media with the real-world engagements could create positive impacts. Accordingly, in a closed political system, the cyber environment could facilitate blocking out the information and reduce the risk of public social interactions [250].

Some other scholars and political activists argue that new methods of communication and information could create a revolution in the way of civilian's interaction with their governments. A majority of them who belong to the western democratic countries believe that social media would enforce authoritarian regimes to be more responsive to their societies. In this regard, first cell phones, then weblogs and now social media are the common tools for the oppositions in the dictatorship systems.

The western analysts even believe that the new media would convert to the new wave of democratization [251]. Even though they do not pay attention to the limitations and censorship in the dictatorship systems.There could be a moderate perspective in between regarding this topic which is closer to my own opinion. It is possible to argue that although these new medias will not cause the end of dictatorship in the Middle East, they would accelerate the democratic transformations.

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[250] Lerner, Melissa Y. "Connecting the actual with the virtual: The Internet and social movement theory in the Muslim world—The cases of Iran and Egypt." *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*30, no. 4 (2010): 555-574.

[251] Price, J. Hunter. "The new media revolution in Egypt: understanding the failures of the past and looking towards the possibilities of the future." *Democracy and Society* 7, no. 2 (2010): 1-7.

Marc Lynch argues that the new media's such as cable (specially Algeria TV channel), internet, social media have created a new atmosphere in the MENA region that help people to challenge the domination of government on the information [252]. He continues that in the short-term that the new media encourages mobilization by decreasing the expenses of interaction. According to him, new informative technologies are so beneficial for the oppositions for spreading the ideas and beliefs, creating a mutual language and contentious choices among the protestors [253].

According to data, during the Arab spring from the beginning of 2011, Facebook as the most popular social platform in the Middle East had about 21 million users in the Arabic countries and this number reached to 32 million by the end of this year. About 55% of this number were between 13 to 24 [254].

Social media played a crucial role by rising the urban protests, encouraging people to dealing actively with the events and acting as a platform for people to circulate and analyze the related news [255]. However, we should not dwell on the importance of social media and we should not assume that there was no revolution without social media in the Middle East. This theory is flawed for combining tools and the institutional factors of uprisings. The internet was as impactful on the occurrence of the mentioned revolutions in the Middle East as were the cassettes and flyers in the occurrence of Islamic revolution of Iran.

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[252] Lynch, Marc. "After Egypt: The limits and promise of online challenges to the authoritarian Arab state." *Perspectives on politics* 9, no. 2 (2011): 301-310

[253] Ibid

[254] Batstone, Jade. "The use of strategic nonviolent action in the Arab spring." *Peace Review* 26, no. 1 (2014): 28-37.

[255] Dewey, Taylor, Juliane Kaden, Miriam Marks, Shun Matsushima, and Beijing Zhu. "The impact of social media on social unrest in the Arab Spring." *International Policy Program* 5, no. 8 (2012).

The internet did not generate a new culture and did not create a new reality from "nonentity" but paved the path for blossoming of the pre-existing realities [256]. Moreover, some of the overthrown governments during the crisis just shut down the mentioned social networks. For instance, Mubarak's administration attacked the Aljazeera's office and by closing it tried to prevent the broadcasting. However, the impact of these technological tools in occurrence of the Arab Spring is undeniable [257].

The power of social media like Facebook and Twitter in social transformation usually get underestimated. However, the revolutions and critical changes in the Middle East have changed the perception of people towards the social media [258].

The point is how to use these platforms for creating critical changes. Some argue that without Facebook and Twitter there were no Arab uprisings or even not with this pace. They believe the way to make a society free is to give them internet [259].

According to Philip Howard and Hussain, what triggers the uprisings and protests is not only violence of the government or suppressive actions towards people like Bu Azizi or Khalid Saeed, but the spread of the news of these events on social media. They continue, what is interesting about these uprisings is that almost all of them emerged without a specific leader,

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[256] Comunello, Francesca, and Giuseppe Anzera. "Will the revolution be tweeted? A conceptual framework for understanding the social media and the Arab Spring." *Islam and Christian–Muslim Relations* 23, no. 4 (2012): 453-470.

[257] Fridriksson, Andri, Anneli Soomre, Essi Saarto, and Helle Hjordt Hansen. "The Arab Uprising." *Available on http://www. google. com/search? ie= ISO88591&q= pdf+ Fridriksson+ A%+ Arab+ Uprising+ btnG= Search, Last accessed on 1 May 2015* (2012).

[258] Popovic, Srdja, and Kristina Djuric. "People Power: The Real Force behind the "Bad Year for Bad Guys"." *Revolution and Political Transformation in the Middle East-Agents of Change Volume I, the Middle East Institute. Washington, DC* (2011): 14-18.

[259] Eltantawy, Nahed, and Julie B. Wiest. "The Arab spring| Social media in the Egyptian revolution: reconsidering resource mobilization theory." *International journal of communication* 5 (2011): 18.

charismatic ideologue, labor unions and religious clerics. In Tunisia, Bu Azizi's self-immolations triggered the protests, in Egypt the happenings in Tunisia and the other parts of the region joined in after the broadcasting of the uprisings and violations of the government by the Algeria TV channel and social media [260].

7.2.2 The Role of Oppositions

In the years prior to the revolution in Egypt and Tunisia, NGO's, labor unions and syndicates were actively involved in mobilizing rebellions and protests [261].
In Tunisia, "The Al Nahda" party, which once was shut down by Ben Ali, revived itself after the regime change and gained 40% votes in the first parliament's election. In addition, "congress for the republic" and "labor and freedom democratic party" which were both active in the previous administrations reached some achievements and jointly formed a governmental coalition.

In Egypt, various groups like "Muslim Brotherhood", Sufi's, new Wafd party and some other NGO's and unions by mobilizing the creation of a proper ground for united and organize protests and made the power transformation in 2011 much easier and smoother. However, as it mentioned earlier, considerable amount of press freedom was present in both these countries [262].

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[260] Howard, Philip N., and Muzammil M. Hussain. "The upheavals in Egypt and Tunisia: The role of digital media." *Journal of democracy* 22, no. 3 (2011): 35-48.

[261] Dalacoura, Katerina. "The 2011 uprisings in the Arab Middle East: political change and geopolitical implications." *International Affairs* 88, no. 1 (2012): 63-79.

[262] Ahmed, Amel, and Giovanni Capoccia. "The Study of Democratization and the Arab Spring." *Middle East Law and Governance* 6, no. 1 (2014): 1-31.

In contrast, in Libya, where no trace of civil society was left, reformations became violent. Accordingly, after Gadhafi's overthrow, instability and internal conflicts reached the point that split the country into territory of several groups.

Protests related to the shortage of bread in Egypt plus to the global strike of textile factory's employees in 2008, and other periodical big and small demonstrations all triggered the wave of rebellions and dissatisfactions during the years prior to 2011 [263].

relatedly, "Kifaya" or Egyptian movement for change [264] regarding the grievances against the status quo and "We are all Khaled Saeed"[265] had the most impacts in mobilizing protesters and oppositions in Mubarak's last days [266].

7.3 Determiners

7.3.1 Leader's Performance at the Time of Crisis

One of the critical determiners in durability or collapse of a regime at the times of political crisis would be the authoritarian leaders' performance. Leadership is in fact, one of the main pillars of a successful social movement.

While the three factors of dissatisfaction, sedimentation of the ideology and the passion for creating a change are present among the protesters, the outcome would be failure without SMOs

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[263] Ibid

[264] Kifaya brought an end to the Mubarak presidency, and criticized the role of the security services and the culture of corruption they believe Mubarak's leadership has raised.

[265] Khaled Saeed was an Egyptian man whose death in police custody in the Alexandria on 6 June 2010 helped incite the Egyptian Revolution of 2011.

[266] Aarts, Paul, Pieter van Dijke, Iris Kolman, Jort Statema, and Ghassan Dahhan. "From resilience to revolt: Making sense of the Arab spring." (2012).

or a proper leadership. The success of a movement is depended on a leadership which can activate the dissatisfaction and by using them create the change [267].

According to Max Weber, there are three types of legitimacy for a leadership: charismatic, traditional, and rational [268]. Weber believes that most of the successful social movements or revolutions have been formed by the charismatic power of a leader. At these times, the relationship between people and the leader is based on emotions. Thus, people would accept all the decisions even if they are not so reasonable [269].

Personal characteristics of the leader and his status would create social loyalty and on the other hand, could cause popularity which would affect social loyalty. Social loyalty would increase liability and accountability of the person and eventually would transform norms and values of the supporters. This factor would lead to convergence of the people and production of the social capital [270].

Handling street protests and popular demands could play a determinative role. For instance, announcing statements like "I have heard your revolutionary message too. I do guarantee an administration based on constitution, social justice and national will far from corruption, autarky and oppression" or "My actions towards your demands is an irrevocable commitment" during the critical moments just contain a message regarding the weakness of the system and possibility of extra attacks. Ben Ali and Mubarak both did the same in their last TV announcement and asked

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[267] Harati, Muhammad Javad. "The Difference Between the Role and Position of Leadership in Islamic Revolution of Iran and the Egyptian Islamic Awakening." (2012): 233-252.

[268] Bashiriyeh, Hossein. "Counter-Revolution and Revolt in Iran: An Interview with Iranian Political Scientist Hossein Bashiriyeh." *Constellations* 17, no. 1 (2010): 61-77.

[269] Nash, Kate. *Contemporary political sociology: Globalization, politics and power*. John Wiley & Sons, 2009.

[270] Carothers, Thomas. "The end of the transition paradigm." *Journal of democracy* 13, no. 1 (2002): 5-21.

the public to get united to prevent violence and destructive actions. They emphasized their honest services of their administration and guaranteed more reforms. In addition, they promised not to participate in the next election. What was apparent, however, was the real weakness of the system against the uprisings; Giving privileges which they never have done before and shifting their positions completely, had a clear message for civil society.

Relatedly, regarding the role of the leaders, at the times of crisis, both their physical and psychological conditions are important. What was clear during the last TV speech of Ben Ali and Mubarak was the aging effects and the weak tone in their voices. Specifically, in Egypt, publicizing the replacement of Mubarak by his son, had telegraphed the poor physical condition of the leader to the society earlier.

Many scholars argue that crisis sometimes could provide key opportunities for reform. However, for systems with fundamental issues and corrupted foundations these opportunities are so small and far from the reach. During these situations, it is possible to act quickly instead of making announcements and refuse any types of violence or do the exact opposite thing and try to suppress the uprisings by help of the police forces and military [271].

7.3.2 The Role of Police Forces and Military

Police and military forces are the main tool of the authoritarian regimes for obliging people to obey and upholding their power against the opposition. Collapse of governments define whether they remain unsuccessful in using their coercion tool for any reason or if the oppositions mobilize a much stronger power against the government. Military and police forces were the

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[271] Boin, Arjen, and Paul'T. Hart. "Public leadership in times of crisis: mission impossible?." *Public administration review* 63, no. 5 (2003): 544-553.

most important tool in hands of the Arab dictators for confronting the opposition in recent

decades. Majority of the Arab leaders had a military background. From 1967 and most of

Mubarak's 30 years of leadership, Egypt was running by emergency constitution law. According

to this law, many leverages were in hand of the police and military forces for suppressing the

press and restraining parties and communities. For instance, arresting without a warrant was

legalized in Tunisia. The case was similar in Tunisia, Algeria, Syria, and Yemen; Ghaddafi's

Libya was a police state [272].

During the uprisings known as the Arab spring both police and military forces played a

crucial role confronting the oppositions or surrendering their demands. In all the involved

countries, at the beginning the government just used the police forces. Later, by increasing of the

protesters number and continuation of the uprisings, the military got involved.

The critical moment during the uprisings was when the military in Tunisia and Egypt refused to

open fire on the protesters and not only did not support security and police guards but also asked

them to not act aggressively against the protesters [273] .

The Egyptian and Tunisian military believed that they were responsible for providing

security and supporting country against the foreign threats, not an ideology, a specific party, or a

political system. Such a perception regarding the role of the military in the society, would lead to

acting based on the constitution at the times of crisis and not supporting the system. Presence of

the public in the streets with no fear also could prepare the ground for the formation. Yet, it

should be mentioned that the rate of interest of military in the governmental facilities and

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[272] Nepstad, Sharon Erickson. "Mutiny and nonviolence in the Arab Spring: Exploring military defections and loyalty in Egypt, Bahrain, and Syria." *Journal of Peace Research* 50, no. 3 (2013): 337-349.

[273] Ibid

financial resources and their perception of the international society's spot regarding the internal transformations could impact their performance.

In both mentioned cases, the situation had been against the ruling regime [274]. This was not the case in Libya, or Yemen. Thus, uprisings became lengthy, fierce, and bloody. In both Egypt and Tunisia, military forces except the high rank militia officers, not only benefited from the economic development but also were realizing that the international community's perception is affiliated with the regime transformation. Regarding the Tunisian and Egyptian alterations, the international community did not block the transformations and by calling it the "Arab Spring" informed the spring of democracy and freedom to the Arab's world [275].

Now the main question is why Arab militaries had different reactions in different states? It seems one of the reasons was related to the members which the military was made up of. For instance, militaries which majority of the members believe their future and current position would be in danger with a change in the system, will lead to more resistance. This case is related to those militaries in which recruitment was not merit based but instead was based on the connections to the ruling ethnic society (Bahrain), specific group or the leader himself. (for instance, Ghaddafi's military). Respectively, Jordan's military which consists of tribal members of East Jordan's river remained loyal to the regime in the movement which most of its supporters were Palestinians of West Jordan's river. Additionally, Saudi Arabia's International guard which consists of tribal members of center and West also did not hesitate in supporting the regime.

In contrast, Egypt and Tunisia which had a more professional recruitment and were not concerned about the impact of regime change on their future, remained neutral [276]. Syria's

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[274] Singh, Ojeshwini. "Sambad December 2018." (2018).

[275] Hamid, Shadi. "The struggle for Middle East democracy." Cairo Review of Global Affairs 23 (2011): 18-29.
[276] Gause III, F. Gregory. "Can democracy stop terrorism?." *Foreign Affairs* (2005): 62-76.

military which was under the command of Alevi's and Assad's family and Yemen's military the majority of which was under the direct command of Abdullah Saleh's close relatives, all remained loyal to their regimes.

The aftermath of Mubarak's overthrowal proves that Egypt's military was not interested in being involved in the fringe of Egypt's political developments. This is explainable by the position of this military in the society. Egypt's military for reasons such as being involved in few battles with Israel gained a high status in society and during the last decade has been participating significantly in the economic activities of the country. (Anderson, 2011)
In contrast, Tunisia's military played a more marginal role in the revolution of this country. Even despite the declaration of neutrality after the overthrow of Ben Ali, he did not become one of the main actors. This could be because Tunisia's military did not experience any war and did not have a specific place in the country.

7.3.3 Foreign Interventions

Foreign intervention is one of the key factors of occurrence of the Arab movements. Foreign involvements in the regional politics (U.K till the World War I, and the U.S thereafter) which was through the dependent governments, was the main reason of Arab's deep dissatisfaction of the ruling systems [277]. There was a linkage between the Arab autocratic regimes and the West. These linkages were varied from economic, political, diplomatic ties to

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[277] Amin, Magdi, Ragui Assaad, Nazar Al-Baharna, Kemal Dervis, Raj M. Desai, Navtej S. Dhillon, Ahmed Galal, Hafez Ghanem, and Carol Graham. *After the spring: Economic transitions in the Arab world*. Oxford University Press, 2012.

cross-border flows of people, services, and information [278]. The main concern of these autocrat governments was getting the endorsement of the Western powers instead of accountability. The point is the linkage to the West contributed to democratization by strengthening oppositions and isolating autocrats in the long run. Linkage to the West played a significant role during the Arab revolts between 2011 and 2013. While linkage to the external powers prohibited the collapse of some regimes or delayed their collapse, facilitated the rapid collapse of others.

During the uprisings of Tunisia and Egypt, the Western powers after realizing the immensity of the revolutionary movements, stopped supporting their previous allies. (Only France tried to support Ben Ali against the protesters in Tunisia for a while). Declaring neutrality of the West decreased the confidence of the Tunisia and Egypt leaders and eventually led to their immediate fall [279].

Yet, in Yemen, despite the preference of the Western countries and Persian Gulf states to Abdullah Saleh's stay, the massive protesters and oppositions did allow any financial or even political intervention in support of Saleh. However, after the Jordan's chaos, the U.S and Saudi Arabia which were the main supporters and longtime allies of Malek Abdullah, sent assistance to help the country with their economic and financial difficulties [280].

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[278] Lotan, Gilad, Erhardt Graeff, Mike Ananny, Devin Gaffney, and Ian Pearce. "The Arab Spring| the revolutions were tweeted: Information flows during the 2011 Tunisian and Egyptian revolutions." *International journal of communication* 5 (2011): 31.

[279] Ibid

[280] Moon, Younghoon. "Democracy on the horizon: how the Arab Spring is unfolding in Jordan." *Harvard International Review*33, no. 4 (2012): 28.

Saudi Arabia sent financial assistance to the Mubarak's regime through the Persian Gulf

Cooperation Council, however, this was not enough for restraining the massive Egyptian protests

[281].

As for the Yemeni regime, this type of foreign aid reached to its highest point while

Saudi Arabia started supporting the Al Khalifa regime directly by sending military and troops.

As it mentioned, foreign intervention in the last two examples, act in support of the involved

regimes. On the other hand, foreign intervention was the main factor that prevents the dictator of

an oil-rich country, Gadhafi, for example from accessing financial and military facilities for

ending the chaos and instability. NATO's direct intervention was the fastest factor in collapse of

the Gadhafi's regime [282].

As for Syria, the point is, there are so many foreign countries involved in the crisis that

somehow are supporters of the regime or oppositions. Many of the Arab countries plus Turkey,

are actively trying to oust Assad while Western countries are on the same side. However, Russia,

China and Iran are inclined to maintain this regime.

There is no doubt that the main factor for tracking the events in Syria would be international

alignments and the way of reforming this alignment.

It is apparent from the above discussion that years of experience in conditions like

economic pressure, deep social inequalities, increasing youth unemployment along their

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[281] Esfahani, H. S., and R. Bahrarnitash. "Institutions, Policies and Women's Employment Share in MENA Enterprises." Working paper. Cairo, Egypt: Economic Research Forum, 2015.

[282] Sharp, Jeremy M. "Egypt: Background and US relations." LIBRARY OF CONGRESS WASHINGTON DC CONGRESSIONAL RESEARCH SERVICE, 2009.

dissatisfaction, political suppression, monopolization of power by one family or party and factors like this had created the needed setting for formation of grievance-based social movements in Tunisia and Egypt.

The self-immolation of an individual like Bouazizi was enough to trigger the ignored demands and feelings of humiliation and to transform them into massive protests. The critical question to answer in the next chapter is while all these pressures and barriers exist in other MENA countries as well, why were Tunisia and Egypt the initiators of the Arab Spring?

CHAPTER 8

SUGGESTED MODEL FOR EXPLAINING THE SOCIAL MOVEMENTS IN THE

MENA REGION

The political crisis in the Middle East is the most complicated regional crisis in the world. Domestic factors, regional factors and actors and outsiders all play impactful roles in the process of this crisis. This is while recognizing the factors and impactful actors in any crisis, has the critical role in examining the crisis and the ways to end it. But now it is time for answering the main question of this study. While the crisis was present all over the MENA, and all of the MENA countries are struggling with the mentioned challenges, why were Tunisia and Egypt the initiators of the Arab Spring and why the outcome of the uprisings were not similar in all of the involved countries? What causes the success and failure of each movement?

the suggested model and the outcomes are based on an analytical-explanatory approach by help of case-studies and Brecher research model[283].

8.1 Brecher Research Model

Michael Brecher for answering the vague meaning of crisis presents a new definition of crisis and studied 323 international crises for this matter. Eventually, he argues that it is possible to study a crisis both based on the "actor" and the "system" [284].

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[283] Brecher, Michael. "State behavior in international crisis: a model." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 23, no. 3 (1979): 446-480.

[284] Hossain, Liaquat, Sanaz Khalili, and Shahadat Uddin. "Inter-organizational coordination dynamics during crisis." *Journal of decision systems* 20, no. 4 (2011): 383-396.

Brecher model is a combination of the process of crisis, factors, facilitators, and determiners. Based on the available variables for this study, ethnic minorities, inflexible political system, massive foreign intervention are the critical factors for creating and fueling the MENA region crisis.

Based on the Crisis Theory of Michael Brecher, each crisis would go through four stages.

Creation: (Brecher, 2013)[285]: at this stage, the crisis is starting to form.

Development: (Pick of the crisis): the stage of development of the crisis basically is a stage where the crisis would reach to its maximum level which could lead to the maximum mental pressure. At this stage, the development factor would be, the transformation of anger from the low to higher levels. This could happen by moving from the non-important actions towards the significant or sometimes battles among the oppositions.

Decline: This stage would happen while the opposition groups or other actors realize the outcomes of the crisis. From the government's point of view, the decline of the crisis has been recognized by occurrence of the factors like elimination of the threat, time pressure and possibility of war. This could create the mindset for the involved actors in the war, that reaching an agreement for ending the war and crisis would be the best possible option for both sides.

Influence: (post-crisis): this stage is about the after math of the crisis and the outcomes that has been remained from the involved actors [286].

However, what is important regarding a crisis is "the reasons, factors and the impactful actors in occurrence and development of the crisis". Michael Brecher by finding a connection between the factors of the crisis and its stages, argues that the pre-existing factors and

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[285] Brecher, Michael. *Crises in world politics: Theory and reality*. Elsevier, 2013.

[286] Ibid

determiners of a crisis all make the happening of the creation, development, decline and

influence more possible. This, in fact, is possible by impacting on the understanding of the

decision makers and public opinion at the same time. According to Brecher, some of these

factors are the political parties, geopolitical location, political system, and the intervention of the

regional and international powers [287].

However, one of the weaknesses of the model is its incapability in finding a proper

relation between internal and external factors in formation of a crisis and does not create an

accurate systematic analysis for the crises that still did not reach to their last stage.

Now, it is time to apply the MENA region on the Brecher crisis model. Based on the stages of

the model, obviously MENA is at the development stage or pick of the crisis.

At this stage, some actions will occur from both sides, the powerholders, and the public.

If we imagine society as a form of hierarchical pyramid, the powerholders are on top of the

pyramid and the people power or public are at the bottom. Accordingly, the power would flow

from the top to the bottom, and the power holders are the ones who have the authority for

controlling the state, social norms, myths, institutions, and laws. Moreover, the outcome is what

is beneficial for the power holders and unfavorable for the powerless people or the whole society

[288].

While there is chaos and dissatisfaction in the country, the power holders could use some

strategies to keep existing problems out of the public's awareness. It should take into

consideration that mostly; these strategies are applicable to non-democratic societies. Some of

these strategies which are being used regularly in MENA are as follows:

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[287] Ibid

[288] Moyer, Bill, JoAnn MacAllister, and Mary Lou Finley Steven Soifer. *Doing democracy: The MAP model for organizing social movements*. New Society Publishers, 2001.

1- Managing and controlling the accessible information to the public through the media

2- Denial of the existing problems

3- Creating fear and distress for the public by displaying a false image of the threatening demons (Communism, the West, terrorism)

4- Creating "societal myths", which means showing the exact opposite of what is going on in the reality

Now in response, the public at the time of crisis would have different reactions as well. In most cases, before any social movement or uprising begins, the public are not aware of the violation of their rights and values by the regime. However, they would react differently if they knew the truth.

One possible scenario is related to the time when the regime or the power holders are trying to hide their actual doctrines and policies and the reality of what is going on from the public. At this time the public who are not aware of what is going on and the violation of their interests and just trust the government and support the status quo, by assuming that they cannot change the situation and also justifying that power holders are taking care of more important causes or issues. Thus, it could be concluded that the public either is not aware of what is going on in the country or believes that it is not a severe problem. Yet only 10 to 15 percent of the population are conscious and oppose the power holders' policies.

The second scenario is related to the time of starting of failure of the institutions. The situation is still not that bad. Moreover, power holders are still able to manage the fake news. The opposition groups are not still that strong to change the public opinion. Also, the percentage rise of the public awareness to 20-30% is not still enough to make a change.

The third stage is the stage which is the outcome of the preexisting problems and difficulties that build up over many years. At this stage, people are exhausted and unsatisfied. They reached the point where none of their expectations have met. It is the best time for the opposition to make them aware about the significance of the situation, their violated rights and how they became the main victim of the system. The result would be a sharp rise in the number of conscious and opposing people. While the power holders would continue to hide the issue by controlling the media, social and political institutions and pretend that their policies are unchallenged.

The last stage is when the occurrence of an event or according to Moyer (2001), a "trigger event" would lead to take off the social movements. This event is what is a matter for all the society. Which the combination of this trigger event with the preexisting unhappiness, anger and dissatisfaction would lead to the uprising and protests, no matter of availability or mobilization of resources, political opportunity, or the system suppressions. The social movements which happen at this stage are categorized as the new social movements. However, the success or failure of the movements which would happen at this stage are what is the main concern of this study.

As such, now that we learned about the reasons that made Tunisia and Egypt the initiators of the Arab uprisings, by describing the suggested model, and applying it on the two mentioned cases, I am going to compare and contrast the outcomes, possibilities, differences and similarities.

Figure 2. Suggested Model for Describing the Formation of MENA Movements
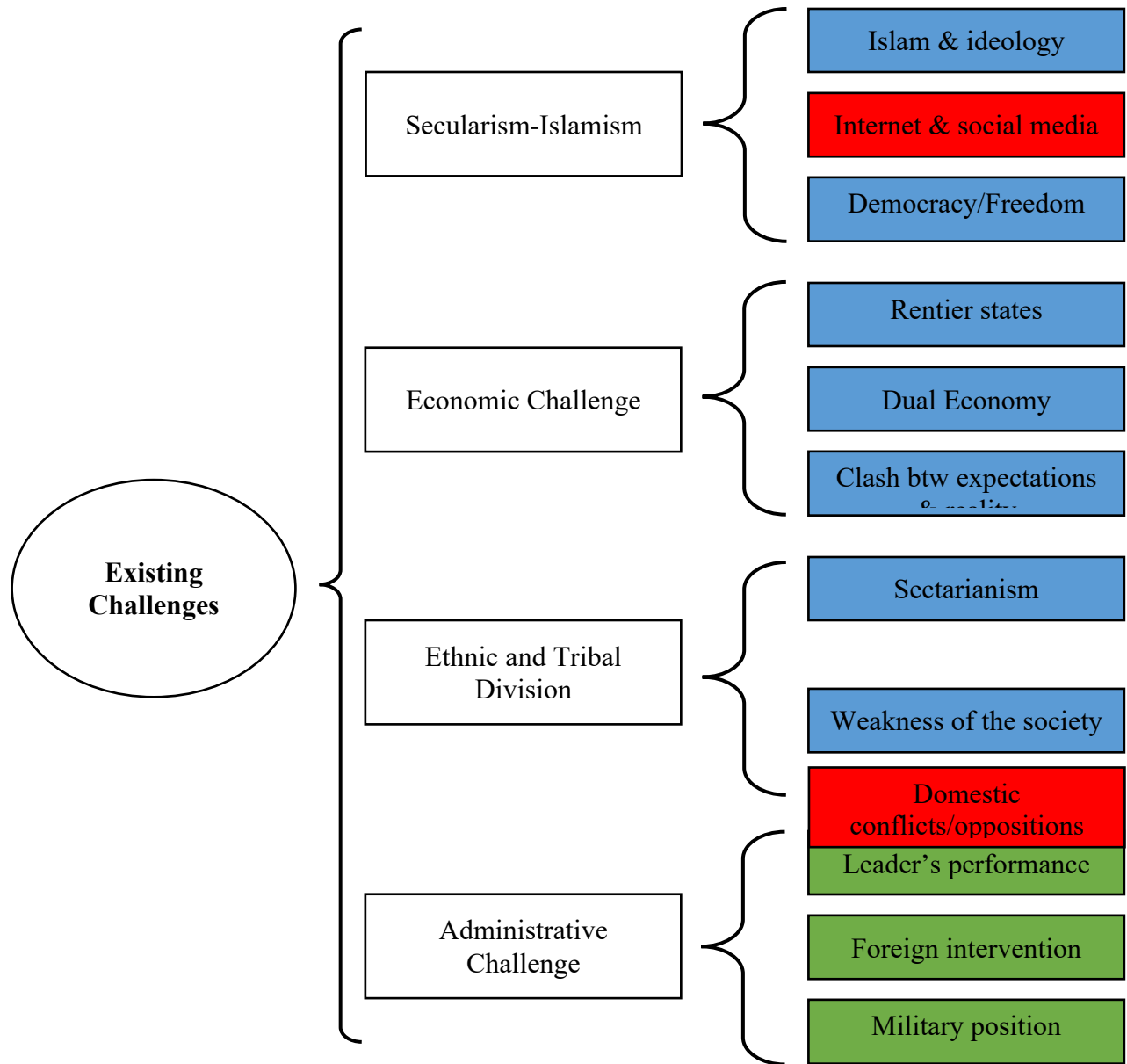
There are various impactful factors on each of the four main present challenges of Secularism-Islamism, economic gap, ethnic and tribal division, and the administrative gap. As for the Secularism-Islamism gap the impactful factors are role of Islam and ideology. As we mentioned the old and humiliating ideologies have started to fade due to the paradigm shift and people now have more tendency towards secular democratic ideas which promote freedom of rights and human dignity. The next factor which is technology and social media was so impactful in this awareness and distinction of Secularism and Islamism. The last impactful factor in this distinction is the ultimate demand of democracy and freedom of rights. People have realized that it is not possible to search for this demand in Islamism, since it has no improvement or revision since the ancient times. As such, matching the new mindsets, demands and attitudes is not possible with the old Islamic ideologies.

As for the next gap which is the economic gap, the impactful factors are the rentier states, dual economy, and the clash between expectations and reality. As it mentioned before, the revenue from the rent of the natural resources just circulates among the government instead of spreading among the people. This could cause a negative effect for the totalitarian countries that instead of having economic growth they would face an economic crisis. The reason is not spending the revenue for the development and growth of the country but for practicing intervention and control on all the economic and social activities of the society and using suppression as needed. corruption is one of the main characteristics of the rentier states, However, as the result of education and social media people's awareness has been increased about the system's massive corruption, increased poverty and social inequality in the society despite the economic growth that countries like Tunisia and Egypt had faced prior to the Arab Spring. This led to more increment of unhappiness and dissatisfaction among the people that

they must struggle with basic needs in these rich countries, with revenue from natural resources. The dual economy is one of the characteristics of the underdeveloped economy.

This feature which exists in the Middle East is also another outcome of the rentier states. As a matter of this fact there are two sectors present in economy. The modern advanced and the traditional one. This division is related to the formation of private organizations which are all dependent to the government and work with the rent revenue. The officials of all these companies are somehow related to the system. Thus, the revenue of all these organizations just circulate among themselves instead of being beneficial to economic growth. This distinction would create a dual culture which is related to division of society into two groups of rich and poor. It is possible to argue that this distinction between the civilians is the reason behind their dissatisfaction and unhappiness and as polls show although prior to the Arab Spring there were economic development in Tunisia and Egypt , but the level of relative deprivation and dissatisfaction among the youth have been increased between 2009-2010 years and thus, the level of their happiness has been decreased Relatedly, during the years prior to the revolution, there was no increase in national income in these countries by means of better splits of the incomes as a result of increased poverty level due to the massive corruption and social inequality in the society

The next challenge which is ethnic and tribal division was impacted by the minority groups which are usually religious minorities or members of a specific tribe or ethnic. They have their own demands, and they would cause social challenges in society for sectarian reasons. On the other hand, civil society is not strong enough and capable of any maneuver in Middle Eastern countries. Although a strong civil society would be able to eliminate the dissatisfactions and decrease the distinction between the tribes and ethnic groups by encouraging them to get united

society. Same as a strong civil society, powerful labor union and NGOs also could have a positive impact on ethnic and tribal division. Instead of the presence of various dissatisfied minority groups in the Middle Eastern countries, the presence of labor unions and NGOs could be helpful in mobilizing people, making them united and eventually creating a proper ground for united and organized protests.

The last challenge is the administrative challenge. This challenge would emerge based on the leader's influence. If the leader only relies on the military for suppressing people by giving them privileges, the civil society will increase their distance from the military. Additionally, in the Middle East there are still monarchical systems. The political system of most of these regimes are under the influence of monarchies with tribal and religious tendencies and their leaders use these tendencies as the logic of politics and government for upholding the status quo. These lengthy administrations and monarchies and their policies for ruling all lead to separation of the civil society from the military which is the main pillar of the government in the Middle Eastern countries. Because according to evidence, mostly, in lengthy administrations, the military is and will remain loyal to the system under any conditions. The last impactful factor is the foreign aid. People are aware of the wealth and natural resources of their countries, but at the same time there are unemployment, poverty, and economic crisis in the country. Yet, the system is still dependent on the foreign aid and instead must obey. This leads to dissatisfaction which the answer is force and suppression by the military. Thus, we can say foreign aids also would be impactful on the distinction between civil society and the military.

Table 5. The Impactful Factors on the Outcome of the Social Movements

Possible scenarios	Foreign intervention	Military forces loyalty	Head of the system's performance	Outcome
1a	û	ü	ü	**Maintain**
1b	ü	ü	ü	**Maintain**
1c	ü	ü	û	**Maintain**
2	ü	û	ü	**Maintain**
3a	û	û	û	**Change**
3b	û	û	ü	**Change**
3c	ü	û	û	**Change**
4	û	ü	û	**Semi-change**

Note: ü represents presence and û represents absence

Based on the existing data when an uprising or social movement happen in a non-democracy which is at the trigger event stage there are three main determiners which could predict the outcome of the success or failure of the movement[289].

Based on the suggested model, there are three impactful determiners at the time of crisis in an involved country. Accordingly, presence or absence of any of these factors could lead to the main outcomes of change or maintenance of the status quo. Now, I am going to explain each scenario with an example and later apply the above model on the three main case studies of this research.

8.2 Possible Scenarios

First it should be mentioned that all the mentioned variables for causing the crisis and public's dissatisfaction are present. A majority of people are aware and conscious about the situation and they demand change. Oppositions are active. People are trying to take the advantage of social media for more awareness despite the censorship. There is the possibility that the trigger event has happened.

Now, I am going to describe the determiners which are all sub-factors under the category of administrative challenge. I argue that these factors could create the various outcomes at the time of crisis for social movements of MENA. As it mentioned before, foreign intervention could play an important role at the time of crisis. Also, it was one of the main factors that led to occurrence of the Arab Spring. The linkages between the Arab countries and the West always exist. Put differently, the Arab autocrat leaders were always somehow dependent on the West and needed their endorsement instead of accountability. However, while there is a possibility that

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[289] Hinnebusch, Raymond. *The international politics of the Middle East*. Manchester University Press, 2003.

linkage to the West prevents the collapse of a country at the time of crisis, the opposite is also possible. It all depends on the benefit and advantage the change or maintenance that the country which is struggling could have for the foreign countries. Accordingly, despite the linkage to the West, in some of the below scenarios there is no sign of foreign intervention at the time of crisis.

The next factor in this scenario is the relationship between the military and police forces and the public. In some of the MENA countries, the regime is being ruled by the previous military officer who has become a civilian politician over time. In this type of regime, the military has the veto right and occasionally acts through the unofficial channels behind the scenes. Egypt, Algeria, and Syria are examples.

Monarchies which are reliant on the tribes, as mentioned before, are more in oil-rich countries around the Persian Gulf, Morocco, and Jordan. In these systems, maintenance of the status quo depends on the previous recruitment from the tribes or the linkage to the foreign countries. As for Bahrain, Oman and Qatar, the dependence on the foreign countries is impressive. Bigger monarchies like the Saudi Arabia and Morocco use the loyal tribal forces for balancing and controlling the military. In regimes with dual militaries, military forces are acting based on an ideology instead of tribal loyalties. Examples are Iraq during Saddam Hussein and Libya during Qaddafi's administration [290].

While according to the evidence, throughout history, many of the Arab leaders had the support and loyalty of the military, there are some exceptions. In general, we can argue that during each of the Arab uprising and movements, the military played a critical role.

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[290] Kamrava, Mehran. "Military professionalization and civil-military relations in the Middle East." *Political Science Quarterly* 115, no. 1 (2000): 67-92.

The last impactful factor is the leadership. The performance of the leader at the time of crisis could easily change the path of the scenario. Playing an honest role at this time and listening to the people's demands by creating some immediate changes could be helpful. Age and the health condition of the leader, weak or strong tones, expectation levels of the public demands all could affect the outcomes.

8.2.1 Scenario 1a

In this defined scenario, according to the records and outcomes of the Arab Spring when there is no linkage to the West or Western countries do not see any benefits in intervention, the military is loyal to the system and is against the public by using force and violence, and the leader displays the best of himself in managing the crisis, the outcome is equal to *maintaining of the status quo.*

Example: **Algeria**

The wave of Arab uprisings did not affect Algeria in the way it had its eastern neighbors. Abdelaziz Bouteflika was able to control the uprisings and disputes in 2011. He perfectly took advantage of the people's fear of getting back to the bloody old domestic wars of the 90s by announcing a set of reforms and at the same time establishing his authority. Moreover, he was chosen for the fourth time as the president in 2014. After controlling two different waves of uprisings on January and February in 2011, he guaranteed political reforms which would be able to deepen the democratic process and also give the chance to citizens to prioritize the choices that are related to their future much easier [291].

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[291] Werenfels, Isabelle. *Managing instability in Algeria: elites and political change since 1995.* Routledge, 2007.

The truth is, in contrast to Tunisia and Egypt, the main power in Algeria is in the military's hands. The capability of the police forces and the gendarmerie were reinforced dramatically since the civil conflict in 1990s and the number of police forces were about 200,000 by the end of 2000s. Moreover, the president cannot act against the generals. The problem is that military's influence is not limited to the government, but it is dominant on country's economy too. However, during the 2011 uprisings the police force did not act brutally, but their presence was enough for the riots to spread without acting aggressively.

Because of the active presence of military and police forces in Algeria's uprisings during the Arab Spring, the disputes were not fruitful the same as Egypt and Tunisia. Finally, at the time of crisis there was no sign of foreign intervention or financial support in Algeria. Thus, the outcome was maintaining of the status quo by Bouteflika's leadership with some practical reformations as people demand [292].

8.2.2 Scenario 1b

In this scenario all the studied factors are present. There is a linkage between the involved country and the West. So, the possibility of the foreign intervention is available. The Military is loyal to the regime and is against the public by operating based on the situation. Leader is also acting properly in handling the crisis. The outcome of this situation is maintaining the *status quo*. Example: **Bahrain**

Bahrain is among the countries which faced the crisis. The uprisings in this country began on Feb 14th, 2011. Most of the population are Shia and the minority are Sunni. The 70%

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[292] Yom, Sean L., and F. Gregory Gause III. "Resilient royals: How Arab monarchies hang on." *Journal of Democracy* 23, no. 4 (2012): 74-88.

Shia population of this country has no presence in any of the monarchy organization, any managerial positions, or macro businesses. When people decided to demonstrate to demand their rights, they faced with a massive suppression by the military guards.

In Bahrain, mercenary forces are being used for controlling the military. Since the Sunni regime of Bahrain believes it is vulnerable against the Shia, they found no other way other than using foreigners (specially Pakistanis) for forming a powerful and suppressor military against the Shia opposers [293]. The Al Khalifa regime distributed the critical and military positions among the group of loyal officers to the royal family. Thus, the military stands by the regime and shut down the riots.

Other than suppressing the protestors in the streets by Bahrain's government forces, Saudi forces were also present there. Saudi Arabia sent military forces to Bahrain for shutting down the uprisings, by following three main goals: First, maintaining the stability of the region and preventing the entrance of chaos and disorder into Saudi Arabia; Second, to be able to play a more active role in the region by keeping the connection with the West; and third, preventing the possible influence of Iran on the majority of Bahraini Shias [294].

Military intervention of the Saudi Arabia in Bahrain is one of the important reasons that has prevented the occurrence of a revolution in Bahrain. On March 14, 2011, 2000 soldiers containing 1200 Saudi soldiers which were supporting by tanks, and 800 Emirati soldiers, entered Bahrain by official invitation of Al Khalifa's administration [295].

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[293] Cruz-del Rosario, Teresita, and James M. Dorsey. "Street, shrine, square and soccer pitch: comparative protest spaces in Asia and the Middle East." (2011).

[294] Ulrichsen, Kristian Coates. *Qatar and the Arab Spring*. Oxford University Press, 2014.

[295] Haji, Yousefi Amir Mohammad, and Fatemeh Shahriar. "Explaining Middle East 2011 events using conceptual-theoretical frameworks." (2012): 7-36.

In Bahrain, the full support of the regime by military and security forces, prevented the demonstrators to achieve both the structural reformations and political-structural alterations. As such, violent repression of the opposers by the Al Khalifa and Al Saud's military forces, caused continuity of frozen politics.

By reviewing scenario 1a and 1b we can conclude that when the variables of leaders' performance and military loyalty to the system are present, the presence or absence of foreign intervention does not result in the system change.

8.2.3 Scenario 1c

During this scenario there is a connection between the country involved in the crisis and foreign countries. Thus, there is the possibility of foreign intervention as needed. Moreover, the military and police force are against the public and loyal to the regime. On top of that, the performance of the leader is not satisfactory. As such, the outcome of this scenario would be the continuance of the status quo.

Example: **Yemen**

Yemen also got involved with new transitions by the beginning of the MENA's uprisings. People of this country challenged the Abdullah Saleh administration by emerging a people's movement [296].

Majority of the social forces that stand against the Saleh's regime in 2011 are as follows: the students and youths' movement, Houthis, Southern people, Al Ahmar impactful family and groups of the military officers which got separated from the Saleh's regime. Thus, in Yemen, that part of the military which had tribal dependence got separated from Saleh and that caused

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[296] Steil, Jennifer. "Yemen: descending into despair." *World Policy Journal* 28, no. 3 (2011): 62-72.

armed conflicts. The full control and authority of the military was in the hands of Saleh's children and relatives for their guaranteed loyalty.

During the uprisings, at the beginning Saudi Arabia started to support Saleh and demanded he maintain of power. Later, by expansion of the protests and the possibility of its entrance to Saudi Arabia, Saudis planned for ousting Saleh peacefully [297].

With the decision of Persian Gulf Cooperation Council, and the U.S support, Mansur Hadi was replaced with Saleh. However, this did not lead to the end of difference among the various movements. The incapability of Hadi's administration in splitting the power among the oppositions, impacted the Yemen Shia's dissatisfactions. The coincidence of this happening with reinforcement of the Al-Qaida's forces in south Yemen, led to more chaos and instability in Yemen. Continues protest of Ansarullah[298] forces against the regime corruption, dependence of the regime to the West and the United States, economic policies of the government, all caused the progress of the Shia's forces to the point that the government and oppositions signed a peace and partnership agreement. According to this agreement, the president was responsible for creating the essential foundation for forming the government of national unity by Houthi's participation. However, after a while, oppositions began their contentious by calling the government's action fake and insufficient. The protests became more serious in 2014 and eventually led to taking control of Yemen's capital, Sanaa and surrounding of the presidential house. The power and influence of the Houthi's made the northern neighbors worry. Thus, Saudi

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[297] NEJAT, SEYED ALI, SEYEDEH RAZIYEH MOUSAVI, and MOHAMMAD REZA SAREMI. "SAUDI ARABIA AND THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN STRATEGY TOWARDS THE CRISIS IN YEMEN." (2016): 137-179.

[298] It refers to Houthi's movement in Yemen

Arabia began their air invasion in March 2015 against the Ansarullah by supporting Hadi's regime. (Nejat et al., 2016)[299]

Thus, replacing Saleh with Hadi not only helped the crisis in Yemen but also amplified it. As such, by the contentiousness of the Houthis to Hadi and reaching the domain of the protests to the capital, he had no other way than leaving the country and escaping to Saudi Arabia. (Hasan, 2011)[300]

To conclude, through these transformations, Hadi's administration was able to infiltrate to some areas and establish a government in Odon [301]. In general, the role of the military in the process of uprisings was against the people and it saved its loyalty to the regime somehow.

By comparing scenario 1b and 1c we can conclude that, when the factors of foreign intervention and military loyalty to the system are present, the leader's performance does not matter, and the outcome would be maintaining of the status quo.

8.2.4 Scenario 2

In the third scenario, the linkage between the involved country and the West exists. So, there is the possibility of the foreign intervention if they believe it is necessary. The performance of the leader is acceptable during the crisis. However, military and police forces instead of remaining loyal to the regime, stand next to the public. This factor by itself is enough for creating the change.

Example: **Jordan**

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[299] Ibid

[300] Hasan, Mehdi. "Voice of the Arab spring." *New Statesman* 7 (2011).

[301] Amin, Samir. "An Arab Springtime?." (2011).

Right after the beginning of the uprisings in Tunisia, Jordanian people started protesting by gathering in the Amman's streets, demanding political change. However, the uprisings in Jordan were not comparable to the mass protests in Tunisia or Egypt.

In the case of Jordan, the demand for uprisings was mainly a change of government and not a revolution. Thus, the king sacrificed governments such as Marouf al-Bakhit [302]and Samir al-Rifai[303] one after the other and by throwing early parliament elections and revising the constitution, starting a direct interaction with the political parties, prevented any contentious towards the head of power and the kingdom. Later, he just limited the dissatisfaction to the government and eventually stopped it [304].

The essence of uprisings in Jordan was not aggressive from the beginning. This was dependent on a couple of reasons. First, the government was so cautious in using force against the protesters. At the same time, protesters were hopeful to be able to get along with the king for creating some crucial changes. They believed that violence only would hurt their position for negotiation and would ruin any possible opportunity for reformation [305].

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[302] Marouf Suleiman al-Bakhit (born 1947) was a Jordanian politician and two-time Prime Minister. He first served as Prime Minister from 27 November 2005 until 25 November 2007 and then again from 9 February 2011 to 17 October 2011

[303] Samir Zaid al-Rifai (born 1 July 1966) is a Jordanian politician who was prime minister of Jordan from 14 December 2009 to 9 February 2011.

[304] Medinkoff. David. (2002). Monarchical Stability and Political liberalization Connections between Jordan and Morocco.In joffe George (eds) Jordan in Transition. London. Hurst and Company.91-110.

[305] Christophersen, Mona. *Protest and Reform in Jordan: Popular Demand and Government Response 2011 to 2012*. Universitäts-und Landesbibliothek Sachsen-Anhalt, 2013.

According to the reports of the Center for Strategic Studies of Jordan University (CSS), 80% of people were against the street protests and 55% of them believed that the protests would lead to chaos and could weaken of the stability and security [306].

The Jordanian officials followed the carrot and stick strategy through the uprisings. By giving the protesters enough freedom to express their anger and dissatisfaction, at the same time they tried to control the protesters by using of force for creating specific red lines, especially regarding the criticism of monarchy [307].

Regarding the foreign policy of Jordan and the foreign intervention during the chaos it should be mentioned that Jordan is the second Arabic-Islamic country that recognizes Israel, and two countries share a land border. Interaction of this country with the U.S representatives proves their intention in controlling the situation in Jordan. Moreover, the Second Abdullah, asked the international figures and leaders of neighboring countries for helping him out of the chaos. By following their suggestions along the Western analysts' tips, he decided to make some calm reforms after controlling the public anger and dissatisfaction. In this way, he believed he could prevent the weakening of his administration pillars and at the same time provide the benefits of his Western supporters [308].

Another thing that helped the Jordanian officials to confront the protests was the financial aid of the other countries. For instance, Saudi Arabia, gave 400 million dollars in financial aid to

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[306] Abu Rumman,(2011).(Arabic)ah-Khwanal-Muslimunmabad Muqat a Intikhabat.(*Amman Center for Strategic Studies.University of Jordan)*.

[307] Samuel, and Tally Helfont. "Jordan: Between the Arab spring and the gulf cooperation council." *Orbis* 56, no. 1 (2012): 82-95.

[308] Barari, Hassan, and Christina Satkowski. "The Arab spring: the case of Jordan." *Ortadoğu Etütleri* 3, no. 2 (2012): 41-57.

Jordan in 2011. The Gulf Cooperation Council guaranteed to help Jordan more than 2 billion

dollars in the next five years and asked Jordan to join this council [309].

The United States also other than military assistance gave about 682,700-million-dollar financial

aid.

To conclude, the United states and Saudi Arabia despite the different orientation against

the Jordan, do not attempt to lose a stable and valuable ally in the MENA region. (Bassam et al.,

2004)[310]

8.2.5 Scenario 3a

This scenario is completely the opposite of the previous one. There is no foreign

intervention at the time of crisis. the linkage between the involved country and the West might

exist or not. At the same time, Military is beside the public instead of being loyal to the system.

Moreover, the leader's performance is not acceptable. There are signs of weakness and accepting

failure. Thus, the outcome would be a change of the status quo.

Example: **Tunisia**

As I mentioned earlier, the revolutions and uprisings of the Arab world, began with the

Tunisia's protests. When a youth, Muhammed Bouazizi in a small city, Sidi Bouzid, burned

himself in public, in objection to confiscation of all his belongings and only source of income, it

was a spark which set the dictatorship of Bin Ali on fire. From that day, protests began from this

small suburb, and reached to other cities and the capital. The reaction of the government to the

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[309] Lucas, Russell E. *Institutions and the Politics of Survival in Jordan: Domestic responses to external challenges, 1988-2001*. SUNY Press, 2012.

[310] AbuAl-Foul, Bassam, and Hamid Baghestani. "The causal relation between government revenue and spending: Evidence from Egypt and Jordan." *Journal of Economics and Finance*28, no. 2 (2004): 260-269.

wave of protests, emerged in two ways. Bin Ali's administration at the beginning used security

forces for repressing the protestors as always. Although the protests not only did not stop, they

got expanded with increased strength. Eventually, Bin Ali, asked the military to come to the

streets for protecting the federal organizations and institutions or in fact helping in suppressing

people. This action had a great impact on the success of the revolution. The reason was that the

military not only suppressed people but also on many occasions played like a guard between the

protestors and security guards and prevented the suppression of the citizens by them. When Bin

Ali realized that he was not successful in managing the chaos, he insisted on meeting the military

commander. He asked the commander to either suppress the protests or resign which he refused.

Later, General Rashid Ammar, the commander of Tunisia's military joined the revolutionaries

and asked Bin Ali to withdraw [311].

At this point, thousands of police forces joined the protesters in the uprisings against the

regime to show their sympathy. (Daily Mail, January 24th, 2011)

It was the exact next day that general Rashid Ammar officially announced that he joined the

revolutionaries and will support the revolution. (Al-Jazeera, 2011)

For some reasons, the Tunisian military was not interested in defending Bin Ali's power.

Moreover, family corruption of the regime disappointed the military. Bin Ali played down the

military to prevent the military's intervention in political issues. The Tunisian military became

weak and it was less than 30,000 forces. This little number was the reason that the military was

weaker than other organizations and instead of being impactful was more under control. This

was one main reason that the military was not behind Bin Ali. In general, the military was not

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[311] Kienle, Eberhard. "Egypt without Mubarak, Tunisia after Bin Ali: theory, history and the 'Arab
Spring'." *Economy and Society* 41, no. 4 (2012): 532-557.

involved in the domestic issues. Thus, remainder of Bin Ali at power was equal to remainder of the military in the shadows. As such, the military by supporting the revolutionaries was hopeful to achieve a better position at the new administration [312].

Put differently, the military sacrificed Bin Ali, for controlling the chaos and preventing the complete collapse of the regime. Moreover, since the military was doubtful about the possible substitutes after the collapse of the regime, it got involved and called itself a supporter of the revolution to prevent the radical's surfing by two strategies. First, the military gained much credit and popularity by standing beside the protesters and secondly, stood beside the public and supported the revolution by sacrificing Bin Ali.

8.2.6 Scenario 3b

During this scenario, the leader's performance is acceptable. However, the leader alone will not be able to handle the crisis without having any support. Since there is no foreign intervention and the military is not loyal to the leader, no matter the power of the leader, the outcome would be change of the status.

Example: N/A

By reviewing the scenarios 3a and 3b we can conclude that when the variables of foreign intervention and military loyalty to the system are absent, the leader's performance does not matter, and the outcome would be change of the status.

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[312] Goldstone, Jack A. "Understanding the revolutions of 2011: weakness and resilience in Middle Eastern autocracies." *Foreign Affairs* (2011): 8-16.

8.2.7 Scenario 3c

In the scenario 3c, there is a linkage to the West or in other words the foreign countries see the outgoing situation beneficial for intervention. It could be because of the natural resources or the sensitive geopolitical position of the involved country. However, the military and police forces stay beside the people by supporting them instead of suppressing them or foreign countries would not let the military to support the leader. Accordingly, the leader appears so weak and scared through the speeches, and the military is not loyal to the system, thus there is no other way than withdrawing and leaving the country. The outcome of this scenario would be a change of the *status quo*.

With that being said, by comparing scenario 3a and 3c, we can conclude that when the leaders performance is not acceptable, and the military is not loyal to the leader, no matter of presence or absence of foreign intervention, the outcome would be change of the status quo.

Example: **Islamic Revolution of Iran 1979**

Iran during the Reza Shah dynasty was dependent to the West. At the time of uprisings, there was foreign intervention against the Shah. Also, according to the recent reports, the United States which was involved in the regime change did not let the military to support the Shah. Military stayed besides the people. Shah who was sick and weak, left the country. By presence of foreign intervention, weak leadership, and disloyalty of the military to the regime, the outcome was the regime change or change of status quo.

8.2.8 Scenario 4

In this case, there is no foreign intervention. The military and police forces are still loyal to the system and doing their jobs. However, the performance of the leader is weak. It is possible that he leaves the country prior to the uprisings. At this time, based on the military's strength in handling the situation, it is possible for them to take control and suppress the uprisings. But it is also possible that they try to settle down the public by listening to their demands and take the control of the administration until transferring it to the next leader. So, we can argue that the outcome in this scenario would be semi-change. Because even if the military takes the control, the status quo will not remain the same. The outcome would be reaching the demands partially and not completely. So, I defined the outcome of this scenario is semi-change.

Example: **Egypt**

Hosni Mubarak after 30 years of leadership, through the 18 days of political protests and riots, withdrew from power on Feb 11th, 2011 and handed over the power to the armed forces. Egypt's military which was one of the biggest militaries in the Middle East and had a specific status because of its achievements in the battle with Israel and the great security performance in defending the boarders and the Suez Canal[313] [314].

The Egyptian military had a close relationship with the society. Military was able to fully control the lack of security in the streets during the beginning of the riots. However, when the anti-riot forces opened fire on the protesters at the Tahrir square of Cairo, they stayed neutral.

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[313] The Suez Canal is a man-made waterway connecting the Mediterranean Sea to the Indian Ocean via the Red Sea. It enables a more direct route for shipping between Europe and Asia, effectively allowing for passage from the North Atlantic to the Indian Ocean without having to circumnavigate the African continent.

[314] Korany, Bahgat, and Rabab El-Mahdi, eds. *Arab Spring in Egypt: revolution and beyond*. American University in Cairo Press, 2012.

Moreover, eventually the military decided to withdraw from Mubarak's regime and maintain the system. With the fall of Hosni Mubarak and formation of the military transfer council, they followed three goals. Guaranteeing remaining of the positive image of the military in the society, protecting the country from the regional and international wars, and creating economic conditions. As such, during the transformation, the military tried to keep the crowd out of the streets to following its goals by creating peace and stability in the country [315].

After officially announcing its neutrality, the Egyptian military tried to protect the public and historical places. Moreover, they announced clearly that they are not going to shoot the protesters. The defense minister also declared that the military would respect civilian's demands, is aware of its responsibility in protecting the revolutionary act of the nation and will support the freedom of speech and the peaceful negotiation of any of the citizens [316].

Mubarak's performance was not acceptable during the crisis and the military was able to easily convince him to withdraw. The military took the power which lasted until the transferring of the executive power to the elected people's government.

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[315] Dunne, Michele, and Mara Revkin. "Overview of Egypt's constitutional referendum." *Carnegie* (2011).

[316] Amin, Khaled. "International assistance to Egypt after the 2011 and 2013 uprisings: More politics and less development." *Mediterranean Politics* 19, no. 3 (2014): 392-412.

CHAPTER 9

CONCLUSION, LIMITATIONS, AND THE FUTURE STUDIES

As we mentioned earlier, the timeline between 2010 and 2014 was an important timeline in the history of the MENA region. Many uprisings and social movements happened in different Middle Eastern countries demanding transformation of the political system. Although, some of the movements failed and some were successful in reaching their political demands or creating change in the political system. But the important point is that the social situation of the involved countries in the Arab Spring have been changed since the occurrence of these movements. One reason could be related to the occurrence of these uprisings after a long period of time. Since the Islamic Revolution of Iran in 1979, there has been no noteworthy if any massive protest or uprising in the MENA region.

Although there was pre-existing dissatisfaction among the people, there was not a proper political space to express the dissatisfaction and amid the fear and closed political system, even visualization of any dramatic political and social transformation was far-reaching for the people. Moreover, what is clear is that the nature of these uprisings and movements was make them different with the 20th century movements like Marxism, nationalism, or movements with religious roots [317].

Later, this study tries to answer two main questions. Other than answering why and how these movements emerged in the MENA region, the important question which is among all the analysts and sociologists is whether these movements were able to achieve their desired demands?

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[317] Ibid

Moreover, the goal of this study was examining the factors which would help a movement to be successful in the MENA region. Although, it should be mentioned that what we measured in this study is not a 100% success or failure.

What we realized through this study is that there is a large amount of literature related to the questions about "how" and "why" social movements emerge in the first place. However, the problem was that many of the studies were related to the political outcomes of the social movements. What makes it problematic was the difficulty in examining whether the political outcome was the result of specific social movements or other factors within a particular time frame or context have been involved too. On top of that, would the political outcome in one state with a specific political system be like the political outcome in another state with a closed political system?

There were various definitions for the social movement in the literature. Some scholars define social movements as the actions that groups or people of a society who are involved in a social or political conflict take by expressing their critical oppositions, in order to reverse the direction of conflict with what it is or what is in contrast with the historical process. (Touraine, 1981).[318]

In order to answer the above questions and as for my own contributions, this research started by reviewing the main theories of social movements, both the traditional theories such as the resource mobilization theory (RMT), the political process theory (PPT), the collective behavior theory and the framing theory along with the new social movement theory. By comparing these two different categories, I learned that while the main goal of the classic social movements is expressing their demands by getting along with the status quo, the new social

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[318] Tourain, A. "The Voice and the Eye." (1981).

movements attempt is challenging the status quo. Additionally, the main struggle of the classic movements is associated with the class conflicts regarding the allocation and production while the new social movements have critical issues with the norms and values. Participation and membership in the new social movements is more relaxed and informal in contrast to the classic ones. While the classic ones are more static, intensive, and hierarchical, the new ones are more flexible, unofficial, and participatory. Finally, the main strategy of the classic social movements is reaching the desired demands by cooperating with the government while the new social movements try to impact the public mind by making them follow non-political strategies.

Later, we reviewed the characteristics of a conductive political environment with the essential resources and required preconditions for the occurrence of the social movements which are participants, SMOs, established the structure of solidary incentive, networks and leaders.

Eventually, by applying the mainstream theories of social movements (RMT, PPT and NSMs) to the case of MENA this research realizes that all these theories emerged in democratic countries with constitutionally open political environments and advanced western societies.

 The resource mobilization theory is well-known as one of the mainstream social movement theories which is an attempt to study the collective actions in western societies. Moreover, this theory tries to examine the reaction of the actors in the presence of political opportunities. Although the outcome and the level of change the opposition groups would be able to create is related to the resources available to them besides the ways that they employed those resources. What is clear is that the requirements and preconditions which are needed for an explainable social movement with this theory are not available in the closed political system of the Middle Eastern countries. Even if opposition groups would be able to create proper opportunities, the government would restrict any act of mobilization with an attempt to create

social and political adjustments. Thus, the characteristics of the recent social movements in the MENA region are somehow unique and we could describe them as more short-lived contentions with no ideology, structure, and official leadership.

As for the political process theory in contrast to the resource mobilization theory, the focus is more on the political opportunities instead of the available or essential resources. According to the PPT theorists' political opportunities are preexisting and the actors should only wait for the right time to follow them. However, this is not the case in the closed political systems. These types of opportunities are rarely available in non-democratic countries and if they are, the government blocks the way to reach them to prevent any challenge towards the status quo. Additionally, the penalty to those opposition groups or individuals who pass the narrow limits would be detention, long term jails, prohibition of work or even execution. The contemporary movements which happened in MENA all emerged as momentary movements, with no specific ideology, organization, or proper leadership. All these characteristics are in sharp contrast with the movements in the west that occur through the available political opportunity with specific demand and leadership.

The application of the new social movement theory which generated in the west as the development of a specific phase of western liberal societies, on MENA is highly challenging. This theory along with its different models are mostly related to the issues and demands of the advanced, capitalist, postindustrial societies. Middle Eastern societies where still struggling for democracy are far away from these types of societies with a stable democracy. To conclude, the foundation of the theories of social movements is based on the experiences and happenings in the American and European societies which are not like the Middle East. Therefore, we need another

theory for explaining the occurrence of the social movements in MENA, their nature and the reason behind the failure or success of the movements.

This research contributes to the social movements' literature first by explaining the nature of social movement of MENA and also by explaining the historical context of the MENA region it examines the obstacles to democracy which is the main reason that makes the nature of Middle Eastern movements different from the rest of the world.

As we realized during the previous chapters, both classic and new social movement theories fall short for explaining the contemporary social movements in MENA. based on the findings/ first contribution of this research there are multiple reasons involved for incapability of these theories and the need for a reconsideration.

First, the nature of the nature of the contemporary social movements in the MENA region has been totally revised. However, there are little theoretical contributions, to my knowledge, related to the social movements in non-democratic and non-western countries. And even the assumptions of the little available literature have never been revised.

The fact is the nature of the contemporary social movements in the MENA is far from the nature of the previous social movements in this region which the most important one was the Islamic revolution of Iran. However, the context and pattern of the region itself is still the same and far from Utopian and democratization. Put differently, there is a duality between the system and its ideologies and the citizen's requests and demands.

According to the findings of this research, the reasons behind the transformation of the nature of the social movements in MENA are respectively, demographic change, education, political awareness of people, creation of a new sociological context as a matter of education and awareness, the paradigm shift, the new technologies and social media.

All these mentioned factors confirm the necessity of the theoretical revision related to the Middle Eastern social movements and moving beyond the general narratives and historical models for studying movements in the politically closed systems or non-democracies.

The second contribution of this study is explaining the features that make the context and nature of the Middle East itself unique and different. As it mentioned before, the presence of democracy is the necessary precondition for formation of social movements. However, all these temporary social movements occurred in the Middle East while democracy is not present there. This research examines the obstacle to democracy in this region that due to their presence they are not capable of completely blocking the emergence of social movements in this region. The social movements might occur despite the obstacles; however, they might not be fruitful for a couple of reasons, which this research will elaborate later as another contribution.

The MENA region is far from utopia and democratization for factors such as the traditional structure, the weakness of the civil society and culture, lack of political, social and economic development, the compatibility or incompatibility between religion and democracy, structure of nondemocratic Middle Eastern systems and rentier states.

What is clear is the demand for democracy, freedom, social and economic development in the Middle East is increasing. Moreover, due to modernization and globalization controlling the public awareness is not that easy for authoritarian regimes. Although they are under lots of pressure for preventing any chaos, at the same time they try to uphold the status quo in any possible way.

In order to have a broader idea about the best possible way to explain the contemporary social movements of the Middle East and the reason behind their emergence along the analysis

of their failure or success this research does a meta-analysis of most of the available previous studies.

Moreover, by taking a theoretical position towards the previous studies, this research tries to not only gather all the previously studied variables related to the Middle East but also add more variables along a comprehensive model in order to unfold the required perquisites for the emergence of a fruitful social movement in the MENA region.

The mentioned variables in the previous studies were divided into two categories of institutional factors and facilitators. After reviewing all the studied variables along with the 4 major present challenges in the Middle East which are secularism-Islamism, economic gap, tribal and ethnic division and the gap between the administrative gap, I defined 3 categories of variables. Institutional factors which contain clash between the expectation and reality, public's distrust in government, sedimentation of the present ideology and social, political, and economic instability. The second group is made up of facilitators that contain the role of labor unions and NGOs and the role of culture and social media. The last group is of determiners that are the leader's performance at the time of crisis, police forces and military position and the foreign intervention. Later, by combining the four major present challenges in the Middle East, the related variables that are the outcomes of each gap and by help of three different cases of Tunisia, Egypt, and Bahrain, I defined a chart.

According to this chart, the secularism-Islamism gap would be impacted by the role of Islam and ideology, internet and social media and democracy/freedom of belief and thought. The next gap which is the economic gap would be impacted by the gap which exists between expectations and reality in society, the dual economy, and the feature of the rentier state. The ethnic and tribal division would be impacted by the sectarianism, weakness within the civil

society and the presence of labor unions or opposition groups. Finally, the administrative gap would be impacted by the leader's performance specially at the time of crisis, the position of military and the foreign intervention.

By studying the correlation between all these variables through the Brecher crisis model, I realized that not all the Middle Eastern countries are at the same stage of crisis. As such, that is why one country was the initiator of the uprisings or the uprisings outcomes were different in the various countries which were involved in the Arab uprisings.

As for the findings of my study, I learned that there are three main determiners which are able to predict the outcome of a movement in the Middle East; Foreign intervention, military and police force against the civil society, head of the system's performance at the time of crisis. Yet, two other preconditions are required; The country should be a non-democratic country and it should be at the trigger event stage. Based on these three determiners I defined my model for prediction of the outcome of social movements in the MENA region.

According to my model, as I mentioned the most impactful determiners for the success or failure of movements in the Middle East region are leader's performance at the time of crisis, the military and police forces position (beside the civilians or against them) and the foreign intervention. Based on this model, there are 8 possible scenarios. In the scenario 1a the foreign intervention is absent; the military is loyal to the regime and is against the people and the performance of the leader is powerful and proper. Thus, the outcome would be the remaining status quo and the example is Algeria.

The scenario 1b is a scenario in which all the three variables are available. There is foreign intervention in support of the system, the military is loyal to the system and the performance of the leader is acceptable in handling the crisis. There is no doubt the outcome is

success of the system in upholding the status quo and failure of the social movement. The example for this scenario is Bahrain.

The scenario 1c is a scenario in which the foreign intervention exists, the military is loyal to the regime, the leader's performance is not powerful. The outcome would be remaining of the status quo. The example of this scenario is Yemen.

In the scenario 2, foreign intervention is present in support of the system, the military and police forces are beside the civilians. However, the performance of the leader of the country is powerful and proper in handling the crisis. Therefore, the outcome would be remaining of the status quo and failure of the social movement. The example for this scenario is Jordan.

In the scenario 3a, all the variables are absent. There is no foreign intervention, the military is not loyal to the regime and the performance of the leader in handling the chaos is not proper. Thus, the outcome would be the success of the social movement. Tunisia is the example for this scenario.

In the scenario 3b, there is no foreign intervention, the military is beside the people and the performance of the country's leader is proper. The outcome though is change of the status quo and success of the social movement. There is no example available for this scenario.

In the scenario 3c, there is foreign intervention against the regime, the military stands beside the people instead of suppressing them and the performance of the head of the system is weak and not acceptable at the time of crisis. As such, the outcome would be change of the status quo and success of the social movement. Example would be Islamic revolution of Iran in 1979.

The outcome of the scenario 4 is a little bit different. There is no foreign intervention, the military is against the people and loyal to the regime. However, the leader is not successful enough in handling the situation. The outcome is not the complete success or failure of either

side. There is a possibility that the military will take control of the country for a while and later either respond to civilian's demands positively or negatively. Therefore, I defined the outcome of this scenario semi-change. The example for this case is Egypt.

To conclude, I defined this model based on the available cases and evidence in the MENA region during the contemporary uprisings. I believe that the three mentioned variables are critical in determining the outcome of social movements in this region. although, I should emphasize on this point again that the defined success or failure is not 100% and could be different in each scenario since the demand of each movement is different. While in one social movement the demand is regime change, in another case it could be just economic and social stability or other demands.

9.1 Limitations

To complete this study, I faced some limitations that should be mentioned. In general, studying politics of the Middle East is not an easy task. From my own experience, I realized there are some major drawbacks to study politics of the Middle East.

The first and main limitation for studying the Middle East is that literature related to the politics of the Middle East is not rich. Due to the lack of transparency, accessing accurate and essential data is not easy. Moreover, regarding the contemporary social movements in the MENA region and the Arab uprisings, which are all recent happenings or somehow on going, the field is properly new and mostly does not agree on the importance of some factors. Thus, for solving this problem, the best alternative is using international databases, since the domestic data if they are available, are either limited or false.

The second problem is the dichotomy of the perspective and ideas between the Middle Eastern scholars who live inside the Middle East and the Middle Eastern scholars who are outside the Middle East and as such have more freedom in writing their ideas and opinions. The process of which literature to choose and what pieces are more applicable to this study was so hard for these reasons. To overcome this problem and in order to have a more accurate and broader idea about my research, I tried to study a handful of literature which contains various categories of scholars; American, European, Middle Eastern inside and outside the Middle East along with the non-English resources. However, since all the mainstream theories of social movements deal with Western circumstances and are based on the west-centric point of view, it was crucial to be careful if the theory could be adopted to the conditions presented by each state in this research.

Moreover, the fact is, it is not easy to write about the Middle East and not be a Middle Eastern or be an outsider who never lives there. Another major point is even various cases in the Middle East are not similar and it is not possible to generalize the theories and apply them to all the different cases in the MENA region. what I realized during my research is that each of these cases and countries carry a different and unique historical or contextual root of concepts. Also, there are lots of local meanings and happenings that without knowing them the comparison of cases might pose a challenge for comparison.

The other limitation which I faced and is common and well-known in the field of social science regarding the Middle East is exceptionalism. Because studying the Middle East is not an easy job for the scholars, both for traveling there or accessing the data and resources related to the politics of the Middle East, this region is known as an exception which due to its uniqueness does not fit into studies informed by conventional social science theories and perceptions. This

issue would lead to another problem which is the disposition of the Middle Eastern scholars against the theory. According to them studying Middle East is more explanatory and empiricist. Although, in this research I tried to transform these limitations to opportunity, to contribute to the literature as a person who is Middle Eastern and lived there for three decades.

9.2 Future Studies

By revisiting the previous related studies and studying the patterns of contemporary social movements in the MENA region I learned that although specific combination of some critical factors could be conducive to regime failure or success, but they are hardly able to provide an all-inclusive map regarding all the factors and causes that could lead reformation in the region. Moreover, just because a specific regime upholds its status quo during this wave of chaos and riots, we cannot conclude that it is entirely a strong or stable regime. The fact is it might not be vulnerable to the specific forms of mobilization that identified those revolts.

In my opinion, besides the determiners that I mentioned, there are some other impactful factors that could affect the civil society, or the opposition groups should take into consideration. These three strategies, I believe, can get the protestors closer to their demand and bring a more prosperous outcome.

First, to strengthen the movement's solidity and weaken the unity of the adversary, the best possible tactic is the nonviolent one. However, at the same time they could use various tactics based on the level risks, but it should be peaceful.

Second, the timing of the escalations should be chosen carefully. The protestors should be aware that at the time of insufficient unity or momentum, escalation could be so risky. While

an escalation with a proper timing could help a movement to experience a diverse group of people with the highest number of participants.

Third, although a fruitful movement should be formed of people with the same demands and concerns but a diversified group of protesters with the same demand could be more successful in reaching their goals than a solid group of protesters.

Elaboration on the above strategies is necessary for the future studies. In addition, scholars may validate the outcome model of this study based on more accurate data from the MENA region.

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