THE ARAB SPRING: NEW MEDIA’S PLACE IN CASES OF VIOLENCE AND
REPRESSION, PEACE AND LIBERTY, AND EVERYTHING IN BETWEEN

By

ZACHARY AARON KAPLAN

A Thesis Submitted to The Honors College
In Partial Fulfillment of the Bachelors degree
With Honors in
Political Science
THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA
MAY 2015

Approved by:

Dr. Jessica Maves Braithwaite
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Abstract:

Recent studies have found that new media use and the political unrest of the Arab Spring are highly related, some even claim that there is a causal relationship. Yet the Arab Spring saw different forms of unrest across different cases, with some countries experiencing nonviolent dissident activity, while others saw violent interactions unfold. How, and if, new media relates to this variation is not well understood. In this study, I examine fifteen MENA countries (excluding Iraq because of its ongoing war) to explore the mechanisms behind nonviolent vs. violent interaction. I derive several hypotheses from existing theories as well as literature on new media in order to report which theories can be observed as they pertain to the Arab Spring. Findings generally support my hypothesis that new media conditions the form of interaction seen between the state and dissidents. Where there is higher media access, countries are better able to emulate the nonviolent model of resistance set before them, whereas where media access is low and/or interfered, dissidents in the MENA region have tended to turn violent.
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Statement of Purpose

The Arab Spring was a chain of spontaneous protest events that took the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) and the rest of the world by surprise. These instances of popular unrest not only enthralled but puzzled, leaving many questions to be answered today. One particular question that I am interested in is why did we see such variation in forms of unrest? In other words, why did we see nonviolent protest in some countries and violent civil war in others? Many point to the extensive use of mass communication through digital media, such as the Internet, cell phones, and social media, (new media) as a causal factor (“What is new media,”
These scholars claim new media gave anti-government activists a quick and effective communicative tool to organize efforts to overcome the collective action problem, while exposing their struggles and conveying their message on an international level (Howard & Hussain, 2011). However, does this use of new media have an effect on whether a given country experiences a peaceful uprising or violent civil conflict? Or do existing theories sufficiently explain the variation seen during the Arab Spring? In this research, I investigate how new media, namely the Internet and social media, conditions the relevance of existing theories of domestic unrest, as they pertain to the Arab Spring.

Statement of Relevance

This project is interesting to scholars in political science because it may provide explanations for why social movements in the region are seeing different forms and results, which is lacking in current research. In addition, this research and the timelines provided constitute a significant contribution to future research not only on this specific topic, but also on a wide-range of topics related to the Arab Spring. Moreover, this may be appealing to those interested in the general public in order to provide depth to their understanding of the origins and intentions of the salient posts, images, and videos depicting civic unrest, disruptive action, and distress signals recently being transmitted through news and social media sites. This research is very relevant to current research being done in the field as well. Scholars have defended that social media has played a large role in propelling these movements and bringing them to national debate. Some have identified new media as a driver of the uprisings, while others think that it had little impact in the onset and nature of the Arab Spring uprisings. Despite these positions, this project takes research beyond the examination of new media’s place in the state-dissident
interaction of single countries, or similar countries, and looks to explore patterns across the varying experiences of all of the MENA countries, making findings more generalizable.

“I feel that as soon as the world can’t use the net to watch, awful things will start happening”

-Tweet by Tim Bray, Engineer at Google

January 27, 2011

Introduction

A sudden string of anti-government demonstrations took the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) by storm in the early months of 2011. Seemingly, the only thing that has been substantiated by scholars, journalists, and the general public alike is the name of this sudden spread of unrest, the Arab Spring. Besides that, the Arab Spring has left many questions to be answered. Among them is the focus of this study, “Why did we see such variation in forms of unrest?” Analysis of all of the protest events in MENA countries, from “the spark” in Tunisia on, reveals differences in state-dissident interactions ranging from some that played out nonviolently, to some that were characterized by moderate violence, all the way to those that broke out into violent civil war. The single constant among all of the countries was that they began with peaceful protests. To illustrate this, a brief overview of the progression of Arab Spring events by country is necessary.

On December 17, 2010, Tunisia erupted in mass antigovernment demonstrations upon the desperate self-immolation of a poor, unemployed citizen, Mohammed Bouazizi, after the confiscation of his vegetable cart (the sole source of income for his family). This reached the eyes, ears, and hearts of many Tunisians, who also were angered by unemployment, corruption, and repression, through a video of the event posted to social media and they rallied behind their
shared grievances by peacefully taking to the streets. Tech-savvy youth activists organized and communicated the events through Facebook and Twitter pages, and after several days of nonviolent protests calling for increased political rights, economic development, and the fall of the regime, protesters and cyber-activists weathered the beatings and arrests, occasional bullets and deaths, and barrage of cosmetic concessions to see the fall of the Ben Ali regime on January 14, 2011 (Gelvin, 2015). The ousting of this autocratic leader and his over two-decade reign not only sent Tunisia on the direction toward democracy, but it exposed the vulnerability of the seemingly invincible Arab leaders (Rifai, 2011).

Following close behind Tunisia, Egypt saw its first signs of unrest in early January with a man setting fire to himself near Egyptian parliament in protest against poor living conditions (“Egyptian man dies,” 2011). This lead to eighteen straight days of protest in Tahrir square that withstood arrests, news and internet blackouts, and violent raids by regime supporters to eventually force the resignation of Hosni Mubarak, who held office for three decades. These protests gave rise to resounding slogans and Twitter “hashtags” of “down with the regime!” and “Day of Rage” and produced a model of protest in focal squares that echoed throughout the MENA region during the Arab Spring (Khatib & Lust, 2014; Patel, 2014). Dissidents remained mostly nonviolent despite attacks by some security forces and Mubarak supporters, until they began to retaliate when the military repressed violently after Mubarak’s resignation.

Beginning around the same time as Egypt, a group of 250 unemployed Saudi university graduates came together on January 9, 2011 in Riyadh as part of a rare show of protest in Saudi Arabia\(^1\). The beginning months of 2011 saw a self-immolation, “Days of Rage” (planned protests after Friday prayers), and women protesting driving bans. Many grievances in Saudi Arabia arose from the marginalization of Shia Muslims by the Sunni ruling family, and economic

\(^1\) Reference Saudi Arabia Timeline, pg. 79
concerns. However, protesters were handled with a mix of tactics, including offerings of additional monetary benefits, a religious ban on protest, and Saudi security efforts (arrests and beatings), which did not see strong dissident responses in the capital and unrest waned rather quickly (Khatib & Lust, 2014).

Algeria was already mobilized by early 2011 from food riots and a housing crisis that carried over and culminated on January 7th when two people were killed and 300 injured as they ransacked government buildings, bank branches, and post offices in some eastern cities (Chikhi, 2011). This set the tone for the “Algerian Spring” that saw flashes of the characteristics of the Arab Spring, such as a self-immolation and large protests, yet never took off. Algeria’s government followed up with arrests, while slashing the cost of staple foods, lifting the state of emergency, and making other minor concessions.

Next, Omani protests emerged peacefully on Jan 17, where protestors hit the streets advocating economic and anti-corruption reform. However as protests spread to Sohar, dissidents began to block traffic, loot, set fires, and clash with police. Some protesters settled in at Globe Roundabout, but violence had already marred the peaceful uprising. Police opted to use force to distinguish protests in Sohar by using rubber bullets, tear gas, and heavy military presence. This moderately violent state-dissident interaction dissipated as the year went on and the regime remains in place (Worrall, 2012).

Yemen was next in this chronology of unrest and they too picked up peaceful tactics at first by organizing marches and sit-ins at the university in Sana’a calling for an end to the regime, which they continued despite initial government concessions. The Yemeni security forces then launched a severe crackdown that left as many as 2,000 dead, and this violent repression, paired with President Saleh refusing to sign a Gulf Cooperation Council-brokered

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2 Reference Algeria timeline, pg. 90
deal to hand over power prompted violent dissident response headed by tribal leaders and military defectors. After the continuation of violent clashes between the two sides, Saleh eventually resigned on November 23, 2011 (Gelvin, 2015; “Yemen: Timeline of protests,” 2011).

One of the more predominant cases of the Arab Spring was Syria, where early actions included a January 26th self-immolation and February 5th planned day of protests. Initially, these actions seemed to be employed in vain due to President Assad’s security forces quick and violent response, brutally repressing any action that could be deemed anti-regime. This strategy worked for the regime, until the arrest and torcher of teens on March 6, which enlivened protests that continually grew and took a lasting turn to violence by August 2011. The situation has evolved into brutal sectarian armed conflict that continues through today (Khatib & Lust, 2014; Arab Uprising: Country by country, 2013).

Unrest also found its way to Jordan by Jan 28th 2011. Jordan’s protests similarly saw a self-immolation and were motivated by calls for jobs, an end to government corruption, and greater democracy. Despite some arrests and scuffles between protesters and security forces, the protests remained largely nonviolent and were met with King Abdullah dismissing his cabinet in early February and other concessions aimed at appeasing the people. Jordan avoided the sustained protests that others saw (Khatib & Lust, 2014).

Later to the action was Bahrain, which kicked off its first protests on February 14th in their social media-organized “Day of Rage.” Protesters first gathered in Pearl Roundabout crying for greater democracy, an end to discrimination against the majority Shia Muslim community, and for the toppling of the regime. King Hamad utilized all of the tools at his disposal to crush dissent by bringing in Saudi troops to contain and monitor activists at all costs, which included
the destruction of Pearl Roundabout, mass arrests, the firing of live rounds, and rejection of hospital attention. Despite a swift and brutal response, dissidents have remained nonviolent, with tension continuing through today (“Arab Uprisings: Country by country,” 2013; Gelvin, 2015).

Just a day after the uprising in Bahrain took-off, Libya found itself embroiled in conflict. On February 15th, Libya’s peaceful protests building up to their February 17th planned “Day of Revolt” immediately combusted into violence upon Gaddafi ordering troops to open fire on protesters. Dissidents swiftly moved to take up arms to oust their notorious leader, eventually gaining military support from NATO powers and several other Arab states, which culminated in the liberation of Libya under their National Transitional Council by late October3.

As the Arab Spring moved into its later stages, Morocco saw protests motivated by youth activists for better civil rights and an end to corruption. This unrest experienced clashes among security personnel and protesters, but the upheaval took a nonviolent course that saw King Mohammad VI pledge constitutional changes and the creation of a Social and Economic Council (Tremlett, 2011; Khatib & Lust, 2014).

Within a week the Arab world’s most democratic country, Lebanon, saw protests of its own begin on February 27th. However, these protests carried a different tone; they were largely motivated by pre-established sectarian forces such as the Shia Hezbollah and the supporters of a past Sunni leader, Saad al-Hariri, while there were rumblings of protesters supporting either side of the Syrian conflict. Lebanon’s association with the Arab Spring was mild and mostly nonviolent (Kenner, 2013, Meier, 2013).

The last country to the chain of conflict was Kuwait. Kuwait did not see large protests until the Summer of 2011, where protesters called for the fall of Prime Minister al-Mohammed Al Sabah because of rumored corruption. In response to this and regime pressure abroad, Emir

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3 Reference Libya Timeline, pg. 81
Sheikh Sabah al-Ahmed Al Sabah, offered grants and free food coupons to every Kuwaiti, along with replacing the PM and dismissing parliament. Beyond these concessions, the Kuwaiti leader ordered his forces to tighten security measures, resulting in accusations claiming the Kuwaiti authorities limited freedom of expression, but the situation has remained fairly stable given the surrounding unrest (Khatib & Lust, 2014; “Arab uprising: Country by Country,” 2013). Finally, the wealthy nations of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Qatar saw virtually no dissent throughout this period, avoiding the unrest that shook the region (Herb, 2013).

The overview of the experiences of each of these countries displays the variation of unrest (or lack thereof) seen during the Arab Spring. As mentioned above, one key constant was the peaceful protests that began virtually every uprising. Many contend that dissidents utilized the growing use of new media to organize, communicate, and bring people to the streets, while bringing to light their problems and sharing information on an international scale. Yet, much of this existing research is based off of the peaceful protests of Tunisia and Egypt (Howard & Hussain, 2011; Halverson, Ruston, & Tretheway, 2013). As depicted in the discussion of countries above, several countries saw violent unrest unlike the situations in Tunisia and Egypt. Does new media have an impact on whether a protest campaign experiences nonviolence or violence? Answering this question takes the consideration of established theories as well as new ones. Relevant literature on socioeconomic determinants of civil war, state-dissident interaction, diffusion, and new research in regards to new media’s role in the Arab Spring all inform this research. In whole, I investigate how new media, namely the Internet and social media, conditions the relevance of existing theories of domestic unrest, as they pertain to the Arab Spring. I hypothesize that as unrest spreads across the region, countries adopted the successful peaceful model laid before them by Tunisia and Egypt, but only those with significant new
media access were able to emulate the nonviolent methods imparted by their neighbors. I find support for this hypothesis, leading to explanations and implications that are important to understanding the Arab Spring and the mechanisms behind unrest in these MENA states.

**Literature Review**

The research question motivating this study is, “How does new media condition the relevance of existing theories of domestic unrest, as it pertains to the 2011 Arab Spring?” Dissidents can employ tactics that range from conventional politics (not available to the dissidents during the Arab Spring) to nonviolent methods to violent warfare in efforts to apply pressure on the state towards their given policy goal or pursuit of change, however what motivates this choice is puzzling. Before moving forward with organizing how to conduct this study, it is necessary to introduce relevant literature on traditional determinants of nonviolent and violent intrastate conflict, the dissent-repression nexus, diffusion of unrest, and new media’s (defined as: mass communication via digital technologies such as the internet, cell phones, and social media) uses and general impacts during the Arab Spring uprisings (“What is new media?,” 2014). These topics together, inform the direction of this research by acknowledging past research on intrastate conflict and highlighting how it may not fully explain the cases of the Arab Spring, paying close attention to the state-dissident interaction for each country and how it influenced the course of conflict, while forming a basis to compare across cases that occurred close in time and proximity. Ultimately, this is paired with the new media climate for each country. This all in hopes of understanding new media’s influence on the varying forms of resistance seen during the Arab Spring through synthesizing these competing approaches that are usually taken separately and considering all of these factors at once.
Factors motivating violent/nonviolent unrest

Traditionally, it is thought that different socioeconomic factors determine whether unrest would likely take the form of violence as compared to nonviolence. For example, cross-national literature on the determinants of civil war (violent unrest) generally suggests that civil war is more probable under certain domestic conditions, such as situations where state capacity is lower, opportunity cost for potential dissidents is lower, per capita income is low or declining (lower foregone cost involved), there is a lack of economic growth, low male literacy rates, state population is high, levels of democracy are low (more specifically, anocracies), the terrain is conducive to a revolt, there is an abundance of natural resources, there is ethnic fractionalization or dominance, among other socioeconomic conditions (Fearon & Laitin, 2003; Collier & Hoeffler, 2004; Hegre & Sambanis, 2006; Cunningham, 2013). Many of these factors pose a sort of “rebel advantage,” where potential rebels may exploit the freedoms of an anocracy to organize and combat the semi-repressive structures, or utilize rough terrain for guerilla warfare, while tapping into the natural resources for funding, etc. (Fearon & Laitin, 2003). These may be separated by grievance vs. greed-based explanations for adopting violent tactics, and may help predict whether or not a given situation is likely to turn violent or not.

However, this “or not” category could mean no dissent, quieted dissent, or sustained nonviolent civil resistance. Thus, Chenoweth and Lewis (2013) acknowledge the importance of studying nonviolent campaigns (especially given their recent success) and this lack of a nuanced approach to identifying determinants behind both violent and nonviolent campaigns for regime change, anti-occupation, and secession by creating their Nonviolent and Violent Campaigns and Outcomes (NAVCO) 2.0 dataset. They explore the determinants of each form of unrest and find that the only factor that was statistically significant for both violent and nonviolent campaigns
was population size, while the significant correlates of nonviolent campaigns are flatter terrain and more durable, authoritarian regimes. Put simply, based off of these predictors for violent vs. nonviolent forms of resistance, it appears that violent tactics are more likely to be exercised by dissidents under “easier” conditions, or conditions where there is some “rebels advantage”, while nonviolent tactics are employed under “tougher conditions,” or situations that are not as conducive to asymmetric warfare. However, what happens when there is not such variation in these determinants across cases, yet different forms of unrest still emerge?

This is precisely the case for the MENA countries involved in the Arab Spring. The MENA region can be classified as the “Arab World,” both because of its geography and its socioeconomic similarities. Most of the inhabitants of the countries of the Arab Spring are Arab-speaking Muslims, who live under repressive, authoritarian regimes (Lebanon has a hybrid democratic regime) that largely depend on rent (mostly oil) as a source of revenue, and male literacy rates and youth bulges along with other demographic and physical indicators are fairly consistent across the cases of the Arab Spring. The main variations come in the way of population and per capita income, but that is also reflective of which countries are major oil exporters and those that are not (Central Intelligence Agency; Gelvin, 2015). Arab countries are by no means homogeneous, but the determinants of nonviolence and violence are not particularly useful in explaining the varying forms of resistance seen during the Arab Spring. In addition, the discussions of violent and nonviolent antigovernment campaigns often ignore failed instances of unrest and places that seemed primed for conflict, but never really started (Chenoweth & Lewis, 2013). Such cases are important to this research. Again, these indicators may be useful for past instances of popular unrest, but since there is not significant variation among the cases of the Arab Spring, there is a need to explore other explanations.
Dissident-State Interaction

While socioeconomic factors are important, attention must be paid to the state-dissident interaction that essentially makes up each conflict. This school of thought assumes that the behavior of a given actor is driven by the behavior of another actor, not necessarily by contextual factors within the country (Moore, 2000). Literature on the dissent-repression nexus helps identify hypotheses for what we should see in individual countries involved in the Arab Spring. As a precursor to this dissident-state interaction, Danneman and Ritter (2014) find that elites will engage in preemptive repression in response to internal unrest abroad in order to prevent rebellion at home. As a result, levels of human rights violations (i.e. increased repression of freedom of expression, unwarranted arrests, police brutality) increase, given increased levels of civil conflict in geographic proximity. They argue that rulers act not to mimic fellow leaders, but to avoid the fate of fellow leaders. In the context of the Arab Spring this preemptive repression hypothesis may be stated as the following:

**H1:** As the spread of unrest continues beyond Tunisia and perhaps Egypt (the first two cases of mass protest), we should see higher levels of violent response by other MENA regimes.

If this hypothesis were true, it may be utilized to understand increases in repression as the uprisings spread and perhaps why some turned more violent (like in Libya, Syria, Bahrain, and Yemen), but repression must precede dissident action for this to be validated. Under this approach, actors are allowed to act prospectively, while the hypotheses that follow assume that states and dissident groups act retrospectively, or base future action off of what the opposition has done in the past. Now, what happens after initial repression or dissident action is where some scholars disagree. First, Lichbach (1987) extrapolates that violent and nonviolent dissident action are substitutes for each other when confronted with repression. Lichbach argues that the
dissidents can choose to either obey the law by protesting peacefully (or, as in most MENA states, not at all), or disobey the law by violently protesting. They make this selection based off of which is more effective in maximizing their desired shift in policy, which is constrained by organizational cost (which accompanies either action) and cost associated with repression. Assuming that repression is costly and that violence and nonviolence are substitutes, the opposition would respond to state repression of one tactic with the adoption of the other. This may be understood as:

\[H2: \text{When dissident violence/nonviolence is met with violence by the state, the dissidents will switch to using violent/nonviolent tactics.}\]

Under this hypothesis, we should see government opposition changing its tactics depending largely on what they identify as least costly. This theory entails homogeneity across cases, with variance in response (violence vs. nonviolence). Moore (2000) also finds that the state acts in a similar manner in substituting repression for accommodation, vice versa, when the cost of their behavior increases. This closely resembles Lichbach’s theory of substitution, but it extends it to the government actors and may be phrased as such:

\[H3: \text{When state accommodation/violence is met by dissident violence, the state will switch to using violence/accommodation.}\]

The state weighs the effectiveness of their tactic and goes with what would be least costly (assuming protest is costly to the state), which can have a profound impact on the form of resistance seen in each case. In addition, in building off of Lichbach’s substitution model, Cunningham and Beaulieu (2010) argue that consistency of government repression is important in predicting dissident response and characterize dissident action over a spectrum of “more violent” or “less violent,” rather than utilizing Lichbach’s dichotomy. They find that
inconsistency in repression stimulates a more violent response, while instances with consistency in state repression see significantly less violent dissident responses. This would imply the following:

\[ H4: \text{The inconsistent use of violence by the state leads dissidents to use more violent strategies as compared to nonviolence.} \]

This is a sort of expansion of the notion of tit-for-tat (TFT), or action reaction, where the state and dissidents cooperate on the first move and subsequently reciprocates what the other does on the previous move (Axelrod, 1984). TFT is an echoing of the opponent’s move where rationality and deliberate choice are not necessary, whereas the substitution model is where dissidents and the state alter their approach in an effort to minimize cost. This drives the next competing hypothesis:

\[ H5: \text{An opponent reciprocates the other opponent’s move, creating a development of action where each side uses similar levels of force.} \]

Here, we should see violent repression, met with violent dissent, or nonviolent dissent, met with accommodation, concession, or some move nonviolent in nature, so on and so forth.

On the other hand, many scholars focus more on contextual factors, like regime type, in determining state-dissident interaction. For example, Gupta, Singh, and Sprague (1993) believe that repression foments protest behavior in democracies, but deters it in non-democracies, where dissident choice is between violent protest and quiescence. Given that all of the countries experiencing dissent activity in the Arab Spring were anocratic or autocratic regimes, this theory would suggest that all of these MENA dissidents should have been quieted once repression was employed by the state. However, the variation of dissident response evident in this study does not fall in line with this belief (Gelvin, 2015). Something that may also be utilized in Gupta,
Singh, and Sprague’s (1993) is their finding that countries with a stronger group identity will be more likely to partake in protest behavior.

In a more actor-level argument, Jazayeri (2015), researched this idea of identity-based motivations for protest across global cases, while looking for “Middle East exceptionalism,” which is the belief that the Middle East tends to be more violent than other regions. Jazayeri (2015) pays special attention to an often-ignored contextual factor when it comes to the Arab Spring, identity-based political inequality. This study comes to the conclusion that countries with large populations of politically discriminated ethnic and religious groups will see more violent protest, finding support for this influencing nonviolence as well but to a lesser degree. Further, after discovering that only in the MENA region are identity-based political inequalities associated with higher counts of both nonviolent and violent dissent across all of his models, Jazayeri claims that “there is something inherent in MENA that makes this dynamic more volatile” (Jazayeri, 2015). This is an interesting dynamic across cases, yet as mentioned before, the MENA region has a high concentration of authoritarian regimes, where many religious groups, particularly between the Shia and Sunni divide, and tribal organizations are marginalized (Gelvin, 2015; Khatib & Lust, 2014). This model helps identify sources of grievance, but falls short in distinguishing between situations where violence should be seen as compared to nonviolence. Moreover, even if violence is more common in regards to this dynamic, that would imply that marginalized religious and tribal groups are participating and somehow directly linked to violence, which may be a lofty assumption. Under these arguments with greater emphasis on domestic factors, there would be variance across cases and homogeneity in response.

In the analysis of each case I will look for situations in which these hypotheses are supported. While they are not all mutually exclusive, one is likely to be more helpful in
understanding why some demonstrations turned violent while others did not. However, what is missing from these theories is vital to this research. How are these governments repressing (physical vs. nonphysical) and how does that impact dissident response? Also, while some of these contextual arguments claim that the impact of new media is “unconvincing,” I argue that new media may be extremely important in understanding why some uprisings played out differently than others and in answering the above questions.

**Diffusion**

With the fast-penetrating unrest and similar tactics of resistance seen across the MENA region from the latter end of 2010 into the spring of 2011, the Arab Spring has been widely coined as another instance of a “domino effect” (Saideman, 2012; Lynch, 2013; Herb, 2014; Bamert, Gilardi, & Wasserfallen, 2015). This makes diffusion literature pertinent to understanding these events, especially with regards to the importance of new media and communication across borders. Drawing from Elkins and Simmons’ (2005) characterization, diffusion means the likelihood of a given event in part depends on the “independent, but uncoordinated,” outcomes of events occurring elsewhere. Despite these countries having varying contextual differences, in the case of the Arab Spring’s wave of anti-government demonstrations, diffusion scholars would argue that overseas influences had a very prominent role in the form of unrest chosen by dissidents. For example, Beissinger’s (2007) modular political phenomena, which contends that sequential events take on similar characteristics, may be applied to this case. As protests started to move across the MENA region, dissidents emulated tactics from Tunisia and Egypt. They began peaceful protests in the streets, spurred by self-immolations and with many of them occupying city squares and using Egypt’s revolutionary slogan, “down with the regime.” All of this occurred within a three-month period (Gelvin, 2015; Patel, 2014). To further
this argument of diffusion, Weyland’s (2005) discussion of cognitive heuristics as being the explanation for clustering of policy innovations is very useful to understanding the adoption of protest tactics. Under this notion, potential adopters of an innovation, here, similar anti-government protest, use cognitive shortcuts (namely the availability of a model and its representativeness) as part of their “bounded learning,” causing an overestimation of local outcomes in their local context. In a quantitative analysis of this form of learning and the diffusion of regime contention in the Arab Spring, Bamert, Gilardi, and Wasserfallen’s (2015) findings suggest that this is precisely how dissident leaders chose their course of action. Other countries imitated the “successful” regime contentions of Tunisia and Egypt (the spark and emulated model, respectively) within weeks, before a meaningful valuation of outcomes was possible and without taking contextual factors into account (Bamert, Gilardi, & Wasserfallen, 2015). This finding not only explains why similar protest tactics are seen across cases, it also sheds some light on why countries saw varying forms of resistance and outcomes as contextual domestic factors took hold.

Each of these scholars argues the significance of outside actors and influences on actions at home. These theories and findings may explain the spread of “the regime must go” slogan, self-immolations, and the other forms of nonviolent tactics utilized in the region. As unrest spread across the region, it is very likely that countries initially attempted to emulate the successful, peaceful tactics of Tunisia and Egypt despite differing domestic factors. Diffusion research is important in understanding why and how domestic unrest clustered in the MENA region in 2011, yet it, alone, only accounts for the spread of nonviolent tactics without fully explaining why some dissidents chose violence (nonviolent vs. violent) seen. Also, given the
emphasis on new media as a tool for international actors to connect, which arguably facilitated such diffusion, an understanding of the new media dynamic is necessary.

**The New Media Dynamic**

The role of new media in the Arab Spring has been an appealing subject to many scholars from the first spark in Tunisia that ignited the string of protest events across the MENA region. Tunisia was quickly called a “Facebook Revolution,” which highlighted the importance of social media, while text and blogs were also used (Gelvin, 2015). Online applications gave social movement leaders and their potential dissidents a tool to create a community of protest in cyberspace, where they could organize collective action, engage with international social movements, and communicate events and information from their perspective to a global audience; all of this within the click of a mouse or a send button (Gelvin, 2015; Howard, Agarwal, & Hussain, 2011). New digital media minimizes organizational costs and helps break the barrier to collective action and the information problem in states that lack strong civil society and legal and democratic avenues to advocate political change. The proliferation of new media also came with the proliferation of revolutionary slogans, images, videos, and newly proclaimed martyrs, taking the MENA region by storm and acting as a catalyst to protest at home and abroad (Halverson, Ruston, & Tretheway 2013). Initially, this was difficult for the state to combat. They had to adjust from primarily keeping tabs on broadcast media, phone calls, and professional journalists to monitoring a massively growing number of activist blogs, social media groups, text messaging, and citizen journalists (Howard, Agarwal, & Hussain, 2011). From 2008-2010 social media membership increased by 360% in the Middle East and it is certain that calls for protest in Tunisia and Egypt were made through Facebook and Twitter, with a study revealing that hundreds of thousands of people took to the Internet to document the protests, making it
extremely difficult to suppress the spread of protest information (Gelvin 2015; Tufekci & Wilson, 2012).

New media not only was an important tool for dissidents to produce a strong opposition, but it acted as a channel for international communication, which ties back into the diffusion literature. For instance, the process of this diffusion during the Arab Spring is further revealed by Patel’s (2014) research focusing on Egypt’s occupation of Tahrir Square as being a “portable” model for others to emulate. Patel argues that countries with latent focal squares in their capitals had a higher propensity for sustained protest, but what is also important here is the way in which this model was diffused (2014). Patel finds that Egypt’s protests were communicated to an international audience across the MENA region and beyond through the Al-Jazeera television network, the Internet, and that the young, tech-savvy activists of Tunisia and Egypt actually knew each other. This validates both Wejnert’s (2005) idea of social ties, emulation, and technology as external sources of democracy, and Levitsky and Way’s (2005) emphasis on the importance of linkage, particularly communication linkage, to democratization efforts. Based on this understanding, it may be argued that new media use facilitated the learning across borders in the Arab Spring beyond just Tunisia and Egypt, creating a new rendition of the “MTV effect.” Activists on either side of the computer screen were able to engage with each other, with the Internet posing as a new form of communication linkage with international reach (Howard, Agarwal, & Hussain, 2011).

At first, it may be argued that new media changed the way dissent is organized. It functioned as a new tactic to catch dictators off-guard and turned individual and localized grievances and dissent into structured, cross-national movements of shared grievances and opportunities for political action (Howard & Hussain, 2011). With the help of new media as an
organizational and communication apparatus, the uprisings in Tunisia and Egypt were largely nonviolent, and this nonviolent model could be dispersed and adopted (Howard & Hussain, 2011; Tufekci & Wilson, 2012). However, as Farrell (2012) noted, there has not been significant research comparing countries that saw major changes, countries that saw moderate concessions, those that saw unsuccessful protests, and those that saw no significant protests at all. It is important to explore not only how new media was involved in successful nonviolent campaigns, but also its impact on cases that saw other forms of unrest and results. This motivates questions like: What happened in countries without substantial access to new media tools? What happened when governments caught-up and further integrated new media into their own counter-insurgency efforts? Does this change the forms of resistance we see?

The government use of media blackouts and interruptions as nonviolent forms of repression adds a new layer to the dissident-state interaction discussed above. Governments have worked new media into their own counter-insurgency strategy to not only censor, but use new media as a propaganda and surveillance tool (Howard, Agarwal, & Hussain, 2011; Tufekci, 2014). For instance, Howard Agarwal, and Hussain (2011) find that since 1995, out of the 606 occurrences that governments have interfered with digital networks, half have been authoritarian regimes, including Tunisia, Libya, and Syria. In times of political instability, rigged elections, and military incursions, rulers have imposed information infrastructure interruptions, including temporary blackouts of entire internet networks, blocking individual websites (like Facebook and Twitter), and ordering web pages to be taken down (Howard, Agarwal, & Hussain, 2011). These restrictions target civil society actors with information linkages and many have also resulted in arrests of these key actors (Tufekci, 2014). This represents the government use of new media for their own benefit, but also, as noted by Edmond (2012), authoritarian regimes would need to
maintain large economies of scale in controlling information systems in order for mass
censorship to be successful. Beyond this, Gohdes (2014) found in a case study on Syria that
government-imposed Internet and cell phone blackouts occurred in conjunction with higher
levels of violent state repression. This affects the dissidents’ ability to coordinate among each
other and constrains the dissemination of information in and out of the country for that period. In
Syria’s case, state violence in conjunction with blackouts left Syrians with essentially no way to
organize amongst each other and overcome extreme repression in a nonviolent manner as in
Tunisia and Egypt. This marks a clear strategy for the government to attain a temporary
advantage over the rebel forces that depend on Internet technology to locate military targets and
to spread accounts and video coverage of massacres and violent events. This may be extended to
the way other regimes are selective in their use of shutdowns and censorship as part of their
strategy.

Furthermore, it is important to identify how dissidents react to Internet censorship and
coordinated blackouts as non-physical repression, and also how MENA dissidents without strong
access to new media act in a string of uprisings where new media has proved to be a key
component to dissident success. In regards to this, Howard, Agarwal, and Hussain (2011) claim,
“the lasting impact of a temporary disconnection in Internet service may actually be a
strengthening of weak ties between global and local civil society networks. When civil society
disappears from the grid, it is noticed” (pg. 7). If the Arab Spring has showed anything, it is that
the Internet has become an invaluable instrument to civil society organizations and people likely
grow accustomed to using it as both an information source and to produce their own political
content. These scholars also argue “when regimes disconnect from global information
infrastructure, they employ a range of stop-gap measures that usually reinforces public
expectations for global connectivity” (Howard, Agarwal, & Hussain, 2011; pg.9). In other words, this may actually strengthen grievances and push dissidents into greater more serious action that includes violence, especially if shutdowns occur in conjunction with violent repression where dissidents may feel like they have no other choice.

As for the populations that already have limited access to the Internet, they may experience that they cannot organize through peaceful means in the same way as others with their tech-savvy youth activists who utilized new media as an integral part of their strategy. This may motivate dissidents to take up violence as a last resort. One explanation could be that countries that do not have wide access to new media technology are not mobilized by the young tech-savvy youth who lack the resources (and taste) for violent interaction, and rather by a militarized group or political institution. Also in defense of this idea, Chenoweth and Stephan (2011) maintain that nonviolent movements fail when they are unable to overcome the challenge of participation and violent repression decreases their likelihood of success by 35%. They must “recruit a robust, diverse, and broad-based membership” (pg. 11). Chenoweth and Stephan claim that they do so by more easily navigating the physical and informational barriers of collective action, especially with media coverage amplifying the effects of nonviolent activity (this notion is also supported by Sutton, Butcher, & Svensson (2014) in their study on both traditional and new media’s positive relationship with mobilization). However, dissidents in the MENA region without sufficient access to new media were unable to navigate these barriers so easily. The physical barrier to participation may be the same for both violent and nonviolent campaigns if the government decides to violently repress any act of protest. Additionally, the informational barrier is still a problem under a highly repressive regime if dissidents do not have access to informational technology to anonymously spread protest information and expose any military or
police wrongdoing. These issues may not allow the opposition to gain the participation necessary for success. One other thing that nonviolent campaigns often rely on is violent repressive tactics “backfiring” on the state, or shifting domestic and external loyalties away from the state in reaction to excessive use of force, but this also requires that news of such mistreatment be thoroughly disseminated (Chenoweth & Stephan, 2011). If a state has firm control over its media institutions and the media climate is not conducive to citizen journalism, a repressive state has no reservations in acting violently and the committed dissidents may resort to violence in response to violent repression and for lack of their ability to gain sufficient support.

Antigovernment organizations may start nonviolent (emulating the tactics of those abroad) and switch to violence not simply because of repression, but because they do not have the means to gain a critical mass necessary for a nonviolent campaign to be successful. As Chenoweth & Stephan (2011) explain a nonviolent movement relies on mass participation, media amplification, and violent tactics by the state backfiring, while violent campaigns do not need such large participation and media help. Based on this understanding, a hypothesis regarding new media may be formed as such:

_H6: Countries that have greater, non-interfered access to new media are more likely to produce and/or emulate nonviolent state-dissident activity, while those without such access, or with mass shutdowns and censorship are more likely to have violent state-dissident interaction._

If dissidents do not have the proper tools to overcome repression, violence is the option. This is especially compelling if the government feels that there are not significant repercussions for violent action, creating an escalation of violence. This provides a new contextual framework involving new media and it is not mutually exclusive with the other dissident-state interactions mentioned above.
Methodology

Through a series of fifteen case studies examining all MENA states without ongoing wars at the time of the study, I analyze the relationship between new media and its role in the forms of social upheaval seen in the region over the course of a one-year period (January 1 - December 31, 2011\textsuperscript{4}). I selected countries for this study that did and did not see sustained uprisings, and countries that did and did not see violence as well to account for the variation evident in this chain of events. 2011 was suitable for this study due to the amount of time required to construct timelines of state-dissident interactions and because it offers a consistent period of time to control for systemic confounding factors.

I constructed a timeline of daily events for each country, where I coded each significant government action as an instance of violent/stringent repression, concession, moderate violence/repression, or media use/censorship; each dissident action as violent forms of civil resistance, peaceful/nonviolent demonstration, moderate dissident violence, and media use/organization; and finally I code defections on either side, where loyalties by key actors (military, PM’s, allies) shift away from the government/opposition threatening the integrity of the regime/cause. As represented in the table below, I use the definition laid out by Chenoweth and Lewis (2013) to express acts of violence as instances carried out “by armed persons, or otherwise involving . . . the deliberate use of violence” (419). These events “involve the use of force to physically threaten, harm, and kill the opponent” (419). Singular events with two or more related deaths, or 50 or more related injuries are considered violent. Next, I consider any act of aggression that is meant to directly harm, threaten the well being of, or deprive the

\textsuperscript{4} With exception to Tunisia, where my analysis covers December 17, 2010 (when Bouazizi self-immolated, sparking revolutionary protest) to December 31, 2011
opponent of freedom and/or involves purposeful destruction of property that does not meet the threshold for violence. This may include police arrests, beatings, shooting, dissident rioting, rock throwing, looting, among other actions of the like. Finally, again borrowing from Chenoweth and Lewis (2013), I understand a nonviolent act as something that is carried out by unarmed actors who do not intend to threaten or harm the well being of the opponent. Many of these protest tactics are pointed out by Sharp (1973), including boycotts, sit-ins, protest, civil disobedience, strikes, etc.

Next, by aggregating across the events of each country’s timeline, I classify each country’s overall experience during the Arab Spring as mostly violent, moderately violent, mostly nonviolent, or no major antigovernment demonstrations, depending on which of these three methods characterized the majority of the conflict. Then, following the structure of Ross’ (2004) study of the influence of natural resources on civil war, I examine the relevance of several hypotheses regarding the state-dissident interaction of each country in relation to its climate of new media usage and access in the country. As stated in Hypothesis 6, I expect countries with lower, or interrupted, Internet access to be more prone to violence than those with greater access, where dissidents are able to reach out to the masses and spread and maintain the model of peaceful protests.
Table 1: Definitions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels of force</th>
<th>Casualties</th>
<th>Action Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High Violence</td>
<td>• 2+ deaths</td>
<td>Govt./Dissident</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 50+ injuries</td>
<td>• Severe use of force by armed actors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate Violence</td>
<td>• 0-1 death(s)</td>
<td>Govt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 1-49 injury(s)</td>
<td>• Beatings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Torture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Mass arrests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Shooting (tear gas, rubber bullets, live rounds)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonviolence</td>
<td>• None (excluding self-immolations)</td>
<td>Govt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Military/security presence, but no signs of aggression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Concessions (salary raises, public aid, legalization of political parties, leader stepping down, dismissing cabinet)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Dissidents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Looting</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Rioting</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Raiding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Dissidents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Boycotts</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Sit-ins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Mass Protest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Marches</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Results

Preemptive Violence

Hypothesis 1 assumed the following:

H1: *As the spread of unrest continues beyond Tunisia and perhaps Egypt (the first two cases of mass protest), we should see higher levels of violent responses by other MENA regimes.*

There was evidence of this preemptive violence in 3 of the 13 cases (excluding Tunisia and Egypt), specifically Bahrain, Libya, and Syria. Rulers in each of these countries did not hesitate to act violently against dissident action to avoid the fate of the ousted rulers in Tunisia and Egypt. For example, King Hamad al-Khalifa of Bahrain was quick to use repression upon protest. State violence was employed just a day after protests began, on February 15th, when police fired upon a funeral procession for a protester who died in the day earlier (Black, 2011). Then by February 17th, security forces numbering over 500 violently raided and destroyed protest camps at Pearl Roundabout, leaving at least three dead (Chulov, 2011). A mix of tactics were utilized in this conflict, but the first response by the government was violent response, which supports Danneman and Ritter’s (2014) argument that governments will repress in response to internal unrest abroad as a preventative measure to quell major unrest before it starts. Unfortunately for the Bahraini government, they still saw sustained protests, but they did avoid violent uprisings unlike the following countries.

Next, before Libya even saw its first protester on the street, Gaddafi made a statement on national television condemning the Tunisian uprising and forewarning his own public as to what protests could lead to (Weaver, 2011). Gaddafi wasted no time displaying his disgust for protesters when he ordered his forces to open fire on crowds immediately upon their first protests on February 15th (“Battle for Libya,” 2011). Rather than quelling protests and reinforcing the
regimes power, this had the opposite effect, resulting in violent dissident response and the eventual ouster and death of Gaddafi (“Libya civil war,” 2014).

Lastly, President Assad displayed a clear intolerance for any form of public dissent. Syrian forces clamped down early and often throughout the early stages of the Arab Spring, addressing any anti-government action, or even thought (published articles, blogs, public comments), with swift and arguably excessive consequences (Khatib & Lust, 2014). This strategy kept Syria from experiencing any major protest until March 6, when word of the arrest and torture of several boys for “anti-regime” graffiti sent Syrian protesters to the street in droves (“Syria civil war,” 2014). Assad remains in power, but the conflict has since turned extremely violent and progressively more complex with as many as 1,000 separate rebel groups operating within the territory posing a clear threat to the regime, which is not the result Assad had in mind with his use of preemptive violence (Rogers et al., 2014). In the countries that it was observed, preemptive repression did not consistently result in the calming of protests, nor did it result in consistently violent dissent across the cases. Hypothesis 1 is not a strong indicator for the way regimes approached unrest, nor does it significantly help understand the variation of unrest seen during the Arab Spring because preemptive repressing led to different responses from dissidents.

On the other hand, in contrast to the notion of preemptive repression, it is notable that many countries utilized preemptive concessions to pacify potential dissidents before they made it to the streets. Based off of the state-dissident interaction illustrated in the timelines (included at the end of this thesis) there was evidence of this phenomenon in 7 of the 13 possible cases, including Saudi Arabia, UAE, Qatar, Kuwait, Jordan, Morocco, and Yemen. These concessions came in the form of salary hikes for public employees and increased public benefits (Saudi Arabia, UAE, Qatar, Kuwait, the dismissal of cabinets and corrupt public officials (Kuwait,
Jordan), and the promise for economic and/or constitutional reform (Morocco). Table 2 shows that concessions did not help these governments avoid protests altogether, but only one country (Yemen) that utilized preemptive concessions saw a highly violent conflict. In fact, Yemen was the only situation out of this group that saw anything more extreme than nonviolent dissident response. Again, violent preemptive repression does not seem to have a clear bearing on how unrest will unfold, but this discussion of preemptive action taken by the government yielded an interesting correlation in regards to preemptive concessions that are meant to alleviate discontent before they drive people to major protests.

The Substitution Theories

Hypothesis 2 was written as the following:

H2: *When dissident violence/nonviolence is met with violence by the state, the dissidents will switch to using violent/nonviolent tactics.*

4 of the 9 possible cases (only nine countries experienced instances of violent state repression) supported the idea of dissident substitution of nonviolence for violence: Libya, Syria, Yemen, Egypt. Each of these countries saw unrest begin with nonviolent protest, but dissidents resorted to violence after experiencing violent state repression. First, Libyans raided arms depots and utilized homemade bombs to retaliate against the state within days of the first instance of violent repression (“Libya civil war,” 2014). Syrians took a while longer to switch to violence, which was largely due to many people’s feeling of a religious and moral obligation to remain peaceful, but constant violent state repression and the formation of the Free Syrian Army by military defectors built wider support by August, propelling Syria into a brutal armed conflict after six months of largely nonviolent dissent (Khatib & Lust, 2014). Yemen as well attempted
peaceful protests that were interrupted by a brutal crackdown. Tribal leaders and military defectors facilitated the switch to violent tactics that characterized the rest of the conflict and forced Saleh’s resignation (Gelvin, 2015; “Yemen: Timeline of protests,” 2011). Egypt’s situation carried a different storyline. Dissidents did not seem to switch to more violent tactics until the post-Mubarak period. Hypothesis 4\(^5\) may explain this further, but once the newly empowered military began violently repressing protests, dissident-incited street clashes and property destruction became more commonplace (Khatib & Lust, 2014; Shenker, 2011). Lichbach would argue that this occurred based off of cost minimization making violence most effective in maximizing their shift in policy as nonviolent demonstrations became more costly. However, this did not hold true for the majority of cases that saw violent state repression, which questions the relevance of this theory as it pertains to the Arab Spring.

The next tested substitution hypothesis is as follows:

H3: *When state accommodation/violence is met by dissident violence, the state will switch to using violence/accommodation.*

Only in one case, Oman, did the government change its tactics in response to dissident violence. In this case, the government largely allowed protests to carry on nonviolently, but as soon as protesters in Sohar began blocking traffic, looting, and setting fire to government and private property, the government responded more robustly. The military and security forces from then on utilized tear gas, rubber bullets, and at times live ammunition to quiet both rioters and peaceful protesters (Worrall, 2012). Beyond Oman, only Algeria and Morocco saw dissident moderate violence precede any form of state repression, and neither of these states drastically

\[^5\] See Inconsistency and Violence, pg. 33
changed their counter-insurgency tactics. This finding represents that MENA states did not necessarily alter their tactics based off of opposition violence.

Despite this finding, in three countries (Yemen, Jordan, Saudi Arabia) initial responses to dissident activity involved nonviolent concessions, but as protests continued, the responses became progressively more violent, escalating from arrests and beatings in Jordan and Saudi Arabia, to using government snipers to take out activists in Yemen. This would show that the longer any kind of dissent ensues, the more hostile the state becomes. However, the majority of the cases saw a mixture of tactics (nonviolent to violent) utilized by the state without any turning point where the government was specifically provoked to switch.

The most significant takeaway from the analysis of theories of substitution in the Arab Spring is actually that nonviolence and violence do not seem to be clear substitutes, so other explanations for variation in forms of unrest must be explored. In some situations dissidents switch from nonviolence to violence, but once they do they do not revert back to nonviolence, regardless of government actions. Again, these theories of substitution assume that dissidents/states choose their strategy (nonviolence or violence) based off of which option is less costly. Given that there are organizational costs associated with either option, the repression/dissent in response to the action is the key variable in the decision. So if this were true, dissidents faced with the repression of nonviolent protests would not have continued nonviolently and the government faced with violent dissent after violent repression would not continue violently. However, this was not the case during the Arab Spring. Bahrain and Tunisia provide two clear uprisings where dissidents continued nonviolently despite times of violent

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6 Reference Algeria Timeline, pg. 90; Morocco Timeline, pg. 93
7 Reference Yemen Timeline, pg. 95; Jordan Timeline, pg. 92; Saudi Arabia Timeline, pg. 79
repression\textsuperscript{8}, while Libya and Syria are obvious examples of when violent state repression continued despite a violent challenge by dissidents\textsuperscript{9}. On top of this, there are state-dissident interactions of MENA states that do not even fit into this dichotomy. Also, at no point did either the government or dissidents switch from violent repression/dissent to accommodation/nonviolent dissent, when met with a violent response. Most of the timelines reveal that once an actor begins to use violent tactics, it only escalates from there, which will be discussed in the analysis of TFT.

**Inconsistency and Violence**

Hypothesis 4 was an extension of the substitution theory, but tweaked to involve consistency and inconsistency of repression and was written as the following:

\textbf{H4}: The inconsistent use of violence by the state leads dissidents to use more violent strategies as compared to nonviolence.

This theory was supported by 4 of the 15 cases in the Arab Spring (Yemen, Oman, Egypt, Bahrain). In Yemen and Oman, the government allowed protest for a few weeks only to begin to violently repress, which led to increased violence by dissidents. Yemen’s crackdown was brutal, involving open fire on unarmed protesters, spiraling the country into bloody battle\textsuperscript{10}, while Oman’s security forces eventually combatted intermittent riots though arrests, tear gas, rubber bullets, and only occasional gunfire (Worrall, 2012). Each had galvanizing effects on the opposition that led to an uptake in violence.

Additionally, Egypt saw greater violence post-Mubarak, when the newly empowered military forces reneged on their commitment to peace and began to utilize the same repressive

\textsuperscript{8} Reference Table 3, pg. 50  
\textsuperscript{9} Reference Table 3, pg. 50  
\textsuperscript{10} Reference Yemen Timeline, pg. 95
techniques that Mubarak did. This likely lit a fire under already mobilized protesters to retaliate with greater use of force, where they attacked the embassy building, blocked roads, and took part in street fights with supporters of the past regimes\(^\text{11}\).

Lastly, Bahrain’s uprising experienced the contrapositive of this hypothesis. The regime consistently repressed dissidents and the protests never turned violent. As noted in discussion of Hypothesis 1, Bahrain was quick to repress protests by firing at a funeral procession, then this was followed by bringing in Saudi troops, who helped closely monitor dissent through the physical confiscation of cell phones (deleting pictures and videos), arrests of activists and healthcare workers for helping injured protesters, deporting international journalists, blocking off access to hospitals after clashes, creating security checkpoints dividing neighborhoods, and also tearing down Pearl Roundabout\(^\text{12}\). Bahrain utilized all of the possible tools at their disposal to maintain control and dissent was largely suffocated by repression. The logic here is that repressing inconsistently only adds to public grievances and discontent, whereas consistent repression breaks down the opposition, or never sees violent opposition build in the first place.

In the end however, the inconsistency and violence theory was not observed in many cases. In fact, consistent repression had the opposite result in Syria and Libya, where violent repression only appeared to fuel dissident violence, which works well with the following hypothesis, TFT. On the other hand, this study is limited to 2011, which makes consistency difficult to gauge since it overlooks ways in which governments responded to unrest in years past.

\(^{11}\) Reference Egypt Timeline, pg. 66
\(^{12}\) Reference Bahrain Timeline, pg. 75
Tit-for-tat (TFT)

Hypothesis 5 describes the reciprocal action reflected in conflict and is understood as such:

\[ H5: \text{An opponent reciprocates the other opponent’s move, creating a development of action where each side uses similar levels of force.} \]

As displayed in Table 3, this phenomenon may be observed in 10 out of 15 cases. First, five of these cases were characterized by the government responding to nonviolent protests with nonviolent action, followed by more nonviolent protests and government concessions. This is evident in Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Morocco, Kuwait, and Lebanon. While these countries did see some moderate violence, they mostly experienced nonviolent protest traded with government concessions, like aid packages, fomenting further nonviolent protest, until enough protesters were satisfied\(^\text{13}\).

Secondly, there were circumstances where moderately violent tactics were echoed throughout conflict, as in the cases of Egypt and Oman. Post-Mubarak Egypt witnessed increased clashes between military police and protesters angered by slow reform that resulted in street battles between armed security and rioters that proceeded through the end of 2011\(^\text{14}\). Also, as described in the discussion of Hypothesis 3, Oman’s security apparatus responded to rioters with arrests, tear gas, and gunfire, which was countered with dissidents throwing stones at police and besieging government buildings, with this “tit-for-tat” continuing until the government got the upper-hand (Worrall, 2012). Furthermore, a mirroring of violent tactics utilized by both sides occurred in multiple countries (Libya, Syria, Yemen). In all of these situations states brutally repressed peaceful demonstrations to be confronted by armed dissidents led by military defectors.

\(^{13}\) Reference Timeline of Events by Country, pg. 63
\(^{14}\) Reference Egypt Timeline, pg. 66
and/or tribal organizations, and each conflict continued down a violent path, with a series of attacks and counterattacks. The Arab Spring saw signs of TFT across all forms of unrest identified in this study (nonviolent, moderately violent, and highly violent). Apparent progression of actions involving similar uses of force is observable across all forms of unrest identified for this study.

There is compelling evidence supporting the TFT hypothesis, which suggests that opponents do not necessarily subscribe to rationality and deliberate choice, but rather are extremely reactionary. TFT also helps explain why there was variation in unrest across cases in the Arab Spring. When one actor became violent, peaceful interaction could easily be taken off course through the escalation of reciprocal moves. Despite the strength of this observation, some situations still are left unexplained (Tunisia, Bahrain, Algeria, UAE, Qatar). Tunisia and Bahrain specifically experienced repeated instances of moderately violent to violent repression by their respective governments, but dissidents never retaliated in the manner suggested by the TFT hypothesis. Hypothesis 6 may shed some light on this observation. In addition, TFT may explain why conflict escalated in some cases, but doesn’t account for why the majority of uprisings began and remained peaceful.

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15 Reference Libya Timeline, pg. 81; Syria Timeline, pg. 85; Yemen Timeline, pg. 95
16 Reference Tunisia Timeline, pg. 63; Bahrain Timeline, pg. 75
New Media and Forms of Unrest

Table 3: New Media and Dissident-State Interaction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State Activity</th>
<th>Dissident Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No Response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonviolent</td>
<td><strong>UAE</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>QATAR</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderately Violent</td>
<td>Tunisia&lt;br&gt;<strong>BAHRAIN</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highly Violent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key: **HIGH NEW MEDIA** (50%+ w/ Internet access) | **Moderate New Media** (30%-49%) | **Low New Media** (29% and less)

It is no mistake that many scholars emphasized the role of new media in the Arab Spring uprisings and this is further proven through the analysis of the following hypothesis:

**H6**: Countries that have greater, non-interfered access to new media are more likely to produce and/or emulate nonviolent state-dissident activity, while those without such access, or with mass shutdowns and censorship are more likely to have violent state-dissident interaction.

As portrayed in Table 3 new media seems to tell a convincing story about the Arab Spring, with all 15 cases at least partially supporting Hypothesis 6. As Chenoweth and Stephan (2011) argued, nonviolent campaigns are successful when they build mass support and violent action “backfires” on the government, whereas they are much less successful when they do not have these elements and the government represses. These results imply that new media facilitated nonviolent movement and a lack of new media access had a more violent effect. This
dynamic is unmistakable upon a case-by-case analysis of the new media climate in each country and the form of unrest experienced.

To begin it is necessary to describe the two countries that inspired the string of uprisings, Tunisia and Egypt. First off, Tunisia had approximately 40% of their population on the Internet and about 20% on Facebook (one of the highest rates in the region)\textsuperscript{17}. Tunisia was the innovator of this string of peaceful uprisings that first put social media, self-immolation, and organized protest into effect. Viral video of Bouzizi’s self-immolation is what ultimately brought people to the streets and lit the fire of unrest in the region\textsuperscript{18}, and Tunisian bloggers continued to circulate news and videos of protesting against their repressive regime (Chrisafis, 2011). Although, before the big outburst occurred in late 2010, Tunisia had tested the effectiveness of online mobilization earlier in the year. This was done through their “Tunisia in White” Facebook event that came to fruition on May 22, 2010 and brought people from their anonymous “virtual debate” about politics to the street, just to wear white and drink coffee as a silent protest against online censorship. Organizers of the event stressed peace and this event had surprising participation that laid the groundwork for what they eventually did in December (Khatib & Lust, 2014). Ben Ali had a grip on traditional media, being largely state-ran, but new media provided a tool to overcome state repression and have nearly unrestrained conversation about taboo subjects (Russell, 2011). The Tunisian ruler tried a mixture of tactics to repress this dissent, including censorship, mass arrests and torturing, ordering security forces to attack and fire on protesters, and eventual desperate concessions, but he ultimately fled the country on January 14\textsuperscript{19}. Tunisian

\textsuperscript{17} Data gathered from The World Bank, 2013; “How wired are the Middle East and North Africa,” 2011; “Middle East: Facebook Penetration,” 2011
\textsuperscript{18} Reference Tunisia Timeline, pg. 63
\textsuperscript{19} Reference Tunisia Timeline, pg. 63
dissidents steadfastly remained peaceful throughout the uprising and posed as an example of nonviolent protest, augmented by new media, ousting a longstanding ruler.

Egypt had similar levels of new media, and also added a new layer to this peaceful model. Around 40% of Egyptians were online and almost 6% were on Facebook\textsuperscript{20}, which because of their large population, meant that Egypt had the most Internet users in the MENA region (Farrel, 2012). From the beginning, the Internet and social media were utilized in the Egyptian uprising to rally people and organize anti-government protests the way Tunisia did. Protest organizers not only created Facebook pages to communicate protest dates, but they used them to circulate stories of police repression and abuse of force, such as the page “We are all Khaled Said” that displayed pictures of a mutilated boy to further stir public discontent. Also online forums were used to communicate PDF tip-sheets on how to pull off a successful protest, and The Atlantic Monthly translated and published an “Activist Action Plan” that Egyptian protesters admitted to using (Khatib & Lust, 2014). New Media definitely helped activists overcome the information barrier involved with collective action. In addition, Egypt was the first to organize demonstrations in a latent focal square, Tahrir Square, which drew more and more people to protest, even if they were not on the Internet, because it was out in the open. As mentioned in prior sections, this use of a prominent city square for protest became commonplace in many of the Arab Spring uprisings. Patel (2014) argues that this portable model found its way to other countries because of Al-Jazeera and social media coverage, which gave dissidents a visual roadmap to carryout peaceful protest. Mubarak combatted dissent by sending “thugs” in to violently attack protesters, cutting off Internet access, and ordering security forces to shoot. However, the military refused to violently intervene and Mubarak officially resigned on

\begin{footnote}{Data gathered from The World Bank, 2013; “How wired are the Middle East and North Africa,” 2011; “Middle East: Facebook Penetration,” 2011}\end{footnote}
February 11, 2011 (Gelvin, 2015). After this point, the peaceful protests were somewhat tainted by frequent scuffles between dissidents and the newly empowered military in a tit-for-tat nature\textsuperscript{21}, but not before Egypt added to Tunisia’s example of how to exercise a successful nonviolent movement (Gelvin, 2015).

As evidenced by the discussion of the manner in which events unfolded\textsuperscript{22} and the description of diffusion\textsuperscript{23}, it appears that a model of peaceful protest was produced and emulated throughout the Arab Spring. The self-immolation and social media-energized protest of Tunisia, paired with the “Tahrir Square model” and “Down with the regime!” chants and slogans of Egypt, seemed to have found their way to “Days of Rage” across the MENA region. People of the Arab World had shared grievances related to youth unemployment, lack of economic growth, marginalization of religious and ethnic identity populations, and political exclusion (Gelvin, 2015). Citizens of other nations struggling with similar problems, perceived the successful dissent of Tunisia and Egypt as encouragement to adopt similar tactics to accomplish their own liberation, despite dissimilar circumstances and not seeing the full outcome of the Tunisian and Egyptian revolts. As Patel (2014) and Levitsky and Way (2005) have argued new media likely facilitated this learning across borders through social media videos of the Tahrir Square demonstrations, cross-national interaction of tech-savvy activists, and discussion of the events on international blogs (Howard, Agarwal, & Hussain, 2011). Moreover, new media access within the countries allowed dissidents to organize and communicate information among each other and to the outside world. This internal communication was vital in being able to emulate the Tunisian and Egyptian models that used new media and saw such substantial participation and international attention, which was paramount to their success (Howard & Hussain, 2011).

\textsuperscript{21} Reference Egypt Timeline, pg. 66
\textsuperscript{22} Reference Introduction, pg. 4
\textsuperscript{23} Reference Diffusion, pg. 17
However, not all dissidents in the region had equal access to the Internet and new media in particular, which means that regime opponents in some countries were not as able to be inspired by and learn from the nonviolent strategies employed in Tunisia and Egypt. As such, it is important to consider the effect that different media contexts have on the ability of dissidents to engage in nonviolent versus violent campaigns against their government.

*Countries with High New Media Access*

This social media impact was especially strong in countries that had high access to new media (UAE, Qatar, Kuwait, Lebanon, Bahrain). For example, UAE (78% had internet access, 45% had a Facebook membership) and Qatar (69% internet access, 34% Facebook membership) had very high access to new media in 2011 and neither even saw a major protest, which is as nonviolent as it gets (The World Bank, 2013; “How wired are the Middle East and North Africa,” 2011). The only notable dissent experienced in the UAE in 2011, was a petition submitted with only 133 signatories calling for the legislative body, the FNC, to have more authority, with a website, *UAE Hewar*, promoting political conversation and criticism. As a result, UAE arrested five activists, who became internationally known as the “UAE-5,” and shutdown the website (“UAE: Free speech under attack,” 2012). International pressure had a hand in these five activists being released and UAE saw no further controversy, likely because polls showed that the government had mass youth and public support (no further cyber-activism), GDP per capita was high (high forgone income if chose to revolt), and Emiratis really did not share the same grievances as other countries because oil wealth was rather well-distributed (Forstenlechner, Rutledge, & Rashed, 2012; Shah & Dhabi, 2011; Davidson, 2012). Qatar did not even see internal controversy as it assumed a mediator and policymaker role in the Arab
Spring as a member of the Gulf Cooperation Council, and it too distributed its wealth to its citizens. The only hitch for Qatar that had an effect on the rest of the Arab Spring, was that it “picked and chose” which situations to support the protesters and which to support the government. Its handling of Bahrain was a glaring example of this. While providing financial and military support for dissidents in Libya and Syria, they supported the government of Bahrain and also did not cover Bahraini protests on the state-owned Al-Jazeera network. This not only threatened Qatar’s reputation of impartiality, but also limited the coverage of Bahrain’s struggle, which had rather severe implications for how that uprising played out and Arab journalism’s reliability (Barakat, 2012; Hashem, 2012). Overall, however, two of the nations with the greatest new media access had the most stable year.

Kuwait and Lebanon also had very high access to new media and they each saw purely nonviolent unrest, with nonviolent government response. For instance, Internet penetration in Kuwait was 65.8% and over 20% of the population had a Facebook membership. Youth movements utilizing digital media helped spur protest in both the summer and fall of 2011, such as the “September 16th Youth” protesters that demanded reforms and that a new PM be appointed. Kuwaiti protests into the thousands and was met with government grants and the resignation of three ministers by the end of the year (Khatib & Lust). Lebanon followed a similar storyline, with Facebook pages mobilizing protesters in late February and early March to protest the sectarian political system that heard some the Egyptian cries, such as “Down with the regime!” and “Revolution!” Lebanon is one of the rare MENA states that allows protest and public political participation, so protests were uninterrupted and by year-end, the government

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24 Data gathered from The World Bank, 2013; “How wired are the Middle East and North Africa,” 2011; “Middle East: Facebook Penetration,” 2011
raised wages and increased benefits for public employees\textsuperscript{25}. These two countries not only showed that new media was actually utilized to gather dissidents for peaceful protests, but that the government responded with nonviolence as well. This could likely be explained by Chenoweth & Stephan’s (2011) backfire argument. These governments were likely knowledgeable of the ability for new media to expose any type of public mistreatment, perhaps even learning from how other governments that repressed violently fared, and opted to maintain peace.

The most remarkable case of the uprisings in countries with high access to new media was Bahrain, where 77\% of Bahrain’s population was online and 32\% had Facebook accounts\textsuperscript{26}. Unlike the other cases with high new media involvement, this conflict was characterized by nonviolent dissent, with fairly robust, “moderately violent” state response\textsuperscript{27}. Bahrain’s “February 14\textsuperscript{th} Coalition,” named after the first day of protest, set aside sectarian identities and attempted to create a peaceful “democratic current” online, where forums were important (specifically on bahrainonline.org), however avenues for success were taken away. As discussed in previous sections, Bahrain exhausted all of their resources to quiet dissent. They not only did this physically through calling in Saudi troops who helped beat, detain, and evacuate Pearl Roundabout, but they also did this non-physically through the destruction of Pearl Roundabout (leaving Bahrain without a main focal point for protests), deportations of journalists, slowing of internet speeds, and censorship (both online and in person). Security forces would set up checkpoints and confiscate cell phones only to delete photos and videos that had the possibility of motivating further protest (Mahmoud, 2011). This lead one of the few human rights activists

\textsuperscript{25} Reference Lebanon Timeline, pg. 110
\textsuperscript{26} Data gathered from The World Bank, 2013; “How wired are the Middle East and North Africa,” 2011; “Middle East: Facebook Penetration,” 2011
\textsuperscript{27} Reference Bahrain Timeline, pg. 75
in Bahrain at the time, Nabeel Rajab, to claim, “They wanted to do their crimes in secret” (Tran, 2011). Also, Qatar-based Al Jazeera, which Patel (2014) placed so much emphasis on its role in diffusing Egypt’s protest model, did not cover the uprising in Bahrain, which affected its ability to gain both national and international attention (Hashem, 2012). In short, the tools (main focal square, new media) for Bahrain to organize and see out a successful campaign were there, but the government targeted these tools, likely learning from the successful models as well, and did so without regard for “backfire.” The international support from Saudi Arabia and their fairly impressive control of both traditional and new media, likely emboldened King Hamad al-Khalifa to act more aggressively to contain dissent. Despite this, Bahraini dissidents, along with all of the other opposition groups with high new media access, remained peaceful throughout Arab Spring.

**Countries with Moderate New Media Access**

Countries that had what I qualify as “moderate new media” (30%-49% of population had internet access) also fell in line with Hypothesis 6 (Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Morocco, Oman, Tunisia, and Egypt). Firstly, the Arab Spring for Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and Morocco was largely nonviolent. For one, Saudi Arabia (47.5% on internet, 12.24% on Facebook) organized protest events through Facebook, including a “Free Saudi Youth” page, and the Internet and took them to the streets for jobs, greater democracy, and women’s rights. This played out largely peacefully as the government responded nonviolently through offering concessions, hacking into social media accounts, and keeping heavy military presence on the streets of Riyadh, which largely kept the capital quiet (Khatib & Lust, 2014). Secondly, approximately 35% of Jordanians

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28 Data gathered from The World Bank, 2013; “How wired are the Middle East and North Africa,” 2011; “Middle East: Facebook Penetration,” 2011

29 Tunisia and Egypt’s new media context described above, pg. 38-40
were on the Internet, while 17% had a Facebook account around the time of the Arab Spring\textsuperscript{30}. Learning from the other countries, protesters in Jordan mobilized, drawing thousands to the street on two different occasions for political and economic reform\textsuperscript{31}. The government responded nonviolently with the dismissal of their cabinet in early February and its prime minister later in October amid allegations of incompetence and mistreatment of protesters\textsuperscript{32}. Protests infrequent, but nonviolent nonetheless. Similarly, 46% of Moroccans had Internet access, with almost 8% having a Facebook account\textsuperscript{33}. This high new media access, along with publicity from national news stations discussing their Facebook page, allowed Morocco’s youth-led “February 20\textsuperscript{th} movement to build to surprising strength, gathering about 40,000 participants (Khatib & Lust, 2014; Tremlett, 2011). Like Jordan, King Mohammad VI offered significant concessions, including the creation of the Social and Economic Council and pushing through constitutional reform that seemed to temper protests (Khatib & Lust, 2014). Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and Morocco experienced nonviolent movements that blended well if the idea of new media facilitating the diffusion of peaceful protest, with the governments acting in a manner that avoided major backfire.

Oman is the only country in this group that does not to fit particularly well with Hypothesis 6. 48% of Omani’s were on the Internet in 2011, with 7.8% on Facebook, however tactics outside of those utilized in the rest of countries with this level of Internet access found their way into Oman’s unrest. Despite protesters around the country gathering largely peacefully in social media organized events (“Green Marches”), dissidents in Sohar partook in rioting and

\textsuperscript{30} Data gathered from The World Bank, 2013; “How wired are the Middle East and North Africa,” 2011; “Middle East: Facebook Penetration,” 2011
\textsuperscript{31} Reference Jordan Timeline, pg. 92
\textsuperscript{32} Reference Jordan Timeline, pg. 92
\textsuperscript{33} Data gathered from The World Bank, 2013; “How wired are the Middle East and North Africa,” 2011; “Middle East: Facebook Penetration,” 2011
property destruction on Oman’s February 25th “Day of Rage.” In turn, troops were ordered to quell the protests that got out of hand, which necessitated the use of force and the Omani government had protests in Sohar under control by early March (Worrall, 2012). Although Oman saw moderate violence by both sides, there still was proof that peaceful protests were spread and communicated via new media.

Countries with Low New Media Access

Lastly, results also suggest that countries that had low new media access were not able to successfully reproduce and maintain the models of peaceful protest (Libya, Syria, Yemen, Algeria). The logic behind this notion is that the campaign could not build to sufficient numbers for a nonviolent movement to apply sufficient pressure on the government, that dissidents had leadership with violent means rather than youth, cyber-activist leadership, and/or governments had disregarded the idea that violent repression “backfires” and the conflict fell into the cycle of TFT. New media could condition all of these arguments.

First, only 14% of Libya’s population had Internet access in 2011, with only about 4% on Facebook at the time of unrest. As if the protesters were not already at a disadvantage from the outset, the Libyan government enforced a news and Internet blackout as soon as the “Day of Revolt” brought protesters to the street on February 15th. This blackout was maintained through the summer and used in conjunction with violent repression, where Gaddafi vowed to crush dissent. Yet, as described in the discussion of TFT, Libyan dissidents, along with military defectors, took up arms against the government in response to repression. Due to the blackout, journalists complained of a slew of unconfirmed reports and miscommunication from within

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34 Data gathered from The World Bank, 2013; “How wired are the Middle East and North Africa,” 2011; “Middle East: Facebook Penetration,” 2011
35 Reference Libya Timeline, pg. 81
Libya, so one could only imagine the communication and coordination problems that dissidents faced (Khatib & Lust, 2014). Moreover, because of Gaddafi’s authoritarian rule, Libya already lacked strong civil society and political organization, and with violent repression and no Internet connection as a channel for communication, dissidents did not have the ability to organize in the same way as other countries did (Bhardwaj, 2012). Dissidents were arguably backed into a corner and, for this reason, it is understandable why dissidents resorted to the violent means they had at their disposal (the military defectors) in order to continue their cause.

Another country that experienced low media access during the Arab Spring was Syria (22.5% internet penetration, 1.1% on Facebook). Just like Libya, dissidents turned violent in Syria. Due to the astonishing number of videos posted to the internet of the conflict, it may be surprising to many to find that social media was not a weighty element within the Syrian conflict during the Arab Spring. In fact, the initial internet-planned protests had meager results, seeing only hundreds show. Also, the Facebook pages “Syrian Revolution” and “Syrian Day of Rage” went largely unnoticed based on those that “liked” it, with the slogan “down with the regime” (based on Egypt’s chants) not being picked up until late May, although the “Syrian Revolution” Facebook page pushed it since January (Moustafa, 2014). To further this point, Lynch, Freelon, & Aday (2014) find that Syrian Twitter posts in English at the time (meant for an international audience) substantively differed from the Arabic posts meant for internal conversation. The English posts carried much more revolutionary language strategically depicting a unified opposition whereas analysis of Arabic posts revealed a scattering of insular networks with differing goals that became progressively more violent. Not only was new media already low, but, as Gohdes (2014) describes, Assad strategically used censorship and temporary Internet

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36 Data gathered from The World Bank, 2013; “How wired are the Middle East and North Africa,” 2011; “Middle East: Facebook Penetration,” 2011
blackouts accompanied by violent repression to gain a temporary advantage over dissidents\textsuperscript{37}. As the conflict moved forward, the peaceful movement lost what little support it had to the Free Syrian Army (made up of army defectors) and online content and discussion revolved around violent dissent to combat the state violence (Khatib & Lust). In the end, Assad’s consistent use of violent repression seemed to motivate dissidents toward violent conflict. As in the Libyan case, Syria’s new media climate did not suit the model of peaceful protest that relied on the Internet and social media, and dissidents under fire and cut off to the outside world fought back.

Yemen fell onto the same course as Libya and Syria, but perhaps through a different mechanism. In 2011, a measly 15\% of Yemen’s population had Internet access, while less than one percent of their population were Facebook members\textsuperscript{38}. Surprisingly, Yemeni’s came out in strength during their initial protests, with a protest on February 3\textsuperscript{rd} reaching over 20,000 participants\textsuperscript{39}. This may be attributed to their more lively civil society and past social movement activity, as compared to Libya and Syria (Khatib & Lust, 2014). However, conflict took a turn for the worst after the Saleh decided to send out pro-government thugs, the military, and snipers to take out activists camping at Change Square in Sana’a\textsuperscript{40}. Violent actions resulted in military defections and mobilized Yemen’s Hashed Tribal Alliance, who arguably “hi-jacked” the peaceful uprising by battling government forces\textsuperscript{41}. Without new media, Yemeni dissidents did not look toward tech-savvy youth activists for leadership, but rather old opposition leaders, defected military officials, and tribal leaders (Khatib & Lust, 2014). This alone helps explain why the situation turned violent. Put simply, computer geeks do not have guns and military

\textsuperscript{37} This is also evidenced in Syrian Timeline, pg. 85
\textsuperscript{38} Data gathered from The World Bank, 2013; “How wired are the Middle East and North Africa,” 2011; “Middle East: Facebook Penetration,” 2011
\textsuperscript{39} Reference Yemen Timeline, pg. 95
\textsuperscript{40} Reference Yemen Timeline pg. 95
\textsuperscript{41} Reference Yemen Timeline pg. 95
generals do. Beyond this explanation, Yemen is the most heavily armed nation in the world, where it is a tradition for men to carry daggers (Gelvin, 2015). Without movement leaders consistently stressing nonviolence, it would be extremely difficult to keep armed dissidents from retaliating when confronted with violent repression. Libya, Syria, and Yemen found themselves in highly violent uprisings, armed with guns rather than computers.

Algeria was the only country that had low access to new media that did not see highly violent conflict. With just 14% of their population on the Internet and 4% with Facebook membership\(^42\), it is safe to say that new media did not have a primary role in unrest in Algeria. Algeria’s conflict started with moderate violence, where dissidents kicked 2011 off with food riots on January 7\(^{th}\) and continuing after a self-immolation on January 16\(^{th}\)\(^43\). Algerian opposition was led by pre-existing, competing activists that were not married, or even acclimated, to the new model of peaceful protest with new media at the forefront (Benakcha, 2012). Unlike the governments of Libya, Syria, and Yemen, the Algerian government responded much like other wealthy oil states by offering concessions and unrest simmered down fairly quickly\(^44\). Without considerable access to new media, the Algerian case of unrest saw sputters of violence and lacked a unified opposition, but it did not see violence escalate to the point of combat, as did Libya, Syria, and Yemen.

The cases of unrest in countries with low media access, divulge lessons of new media’s effect on unrest during the Arab Spring. First, dissidents that had low media access did not maintain peaceful demonstrations. Based off of the information yielded in these four countries, it may be inferred that dissidents did not have the tools of mass communication to build a unified

\(^{42}\) Data gathered from The World Bank, 2013; “How wired are the Middle East and North Africa,” 2011; “Middle East: Facebook Penetration,” 2011
\(^{43}\) Reference Algeria Timeline, pg. 90
\(^{44}\) Reference Algeria Timeline, pg. 90
opposition with common goals, resorting to violent tools at their disposal to pursue their cause. Secondly, in Libya, Syria, and Yemen, the government exploited the absence of new media. Chenoweth and Stephan’s (2011) idea of backfire never truly surfaced in these situations. With dissidents being cut-off to the outside world, it did not appear that the governments had any apprehension in acting violently to suppress dissent. Libya and Syria actually leveraged this dissident shortcoming strategically by enforcing Internet and news blackouts in conjunction with violent repression. In this way, the government could interrupt the opposition’s coordination efforts, and attack when they were vulnerable. However, this strategy seemed to only exacerbate the issue, leading to the next lesson; in countries with low media access, violent repression stimulated violent dissent, propelling conflict into a quickly intensifying contest of tit-for-tat. Countries with low new media access lacked predominant nonviolent youth movements that the peaceful uprisings had, which led to dissidents following the command of military defectors and militarized organizations. Without proper means to replicate the peaceful uprisings of others in the region, the situations turned to violent tactics
Table 2: New Media and Form of Resistance by Country

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Internet/Facebook Access</th>
<th>Form of Resistance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UAE</td>
<td>78%; 45.38 %</td>
<td>No response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bahrain</td>
<td>77%; 32%</td>
<td>Mostly nonviolent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qatar</td>
<td>69%; 33.95%</td>
<td>No response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kuwait</td>
<td>65.8%; 20.64%</td>
<td>Mostly nonviolent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lebanon</td>
<td>52%; 23.11%</td>
<td>Mostly nonviolent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oman</td>
<td>48%; 7.8%</td>
<td>Moderate violence *(Mixed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saudi Arabia</td>
<td>47.5%; 12.24%</td>
<td>Mostly nonviolent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morocco</td>
<td>46.1%; 7.55%</td>
<td>Mostly nonviolent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tunisia</td>
<td>39.8%; 18.8%</td>
<td>Mostly nonviolent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>39.8%; 5.5%</td>
<td>Moderate Violence *(Mixed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jordan</td>
<td>34.9%; 17.06%</td>
<td>Mostly Nonviolent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syria</td>
<td>22.5%; 1.1%</td>
<td>High Violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yemen</td>
<td>14.9%; 0.93%</td>
<td>High Violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Algeria</td>
<td>14%; 4%</td>
<td>Moderate Violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Libya</td>
<td>14%; 4.3%</td>
<td>High Violence</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*(The World Bank, 2013; “How wired are the Middle East and North Africa,” 2011; “Middle East: Facebook Penetration,” 2011)*
*Egypt did not see dissident violence until Post-Mubarak period (possible unorganized anarchy/increased govt. repression); Oman only saw dissident violence in the city of Sohar*
Conclusion

Explaining the variation in forms of unrest seen in the Arab Spring prompts research into the relevance of existing literature on why dissidents act violently vs. nonviolently, but, ultimately, it is new research on new media that provides the most thorough explanation for this phenomenon. First, the countries in the Arab Spring were studied to understand if preemptive violence was exercised by the state in response to internal unrest abroad. Preemptive violent repression was only observable in 3 of the 13 possible cases and did not prove to have either a calming nor escalating effect on unrest within those countries. However, one unexpected finding was generated by this analysis; pre-emptive concessions seemed to maintain peace in 6 of thee 13 cases. The majority of states that offered concessions in anticipation of protests did not see highly violent results (besides Yemen).

Second, the importance of substitution theories in the Arab Spring cases was studied. Dissident substitution of nonviolent activity for violent activity was evident in 4 of the 9 cases where violence was utilized by the state, while state substitution of accommodation for violence when facing violent dissent was only observable in one case. Ultimately, substitution of tactics proved not to be a predominant theme in the Arab Spring because neither the state nor dissidents in any of these cases switched from nonviolent tactics to violent tactics when facing violent activity by the opponent. This calls into question if violence and nonviolence were even true substitutes and if actors made their decisions based off of cost-minimization or not. Rather, in most cases, once one side utilized violence, it seemed to escalate from there, supporting the theory of TFT.

Next, the theory on inconsistency and violence was analyzed in the context of the Arab Spring, but was upheld in only 4 of the 15 cases. This implies that the argument that the
inconsistency of use of force foments violent dissent was not compelling pertaining to the Arab Spring uprisings, however this study is limited by confining research to a one-year period, making consistency difficult to gauge. More relevant to the state-dissident interactions that occurred throughout the region was TFT. TFT was observed in 10 of the 15 cases of the Arab Spring. The government and dissidents involved often seemed to respond to each other using similar levels of force as their opponent, which seemed to be a rather combustible phenomenon in the violent cases of the Arab Spring.

Finally, new media’s role in the production and emulation of peaceful protest was studied across the cases of the Arab Spring. Results indicate that states with high new media access were best fit to produce/emulate peaceful models of protest, whereas states with low new media access were more prone to violence. The logic behind this is that states with high new media were able to tune-in and watch other peaceful protests play out over the internet and replicate these nonviolent models by organizing peaceful protests themselves, building widespread national participation, and international attention. In addition, dissidents that enjoyed high new media access were less susceptible to violence because they had youth, tech-savvy leadership without violent means that stressed adherence to the peaceful models, even despite state repression.

On the other hand, all of the countries with low new media access experienced some type of violent episode, if not utter civil war. Dissidents in these countries not only differed in new media access, but they differed in the tactics they had at their disposal, their leadership, and government response. Dissidents in MENA countries with low media access could not mobilize the number of participants necessary to apply sufficient pressure on the state through nonviolent means (which speaks to new media’s organizational and communicative elements), they had militarized leadership, and their governments were less cautious of possible backfire. These all
culminated with the TFT argument to form a progression of armed conflict in all but one of the states with low media access (Algeria). This research helps extend the arguments that new media was a driver in the successful uprisings of Tunisia and Egypt to that new media had a deciding role in the form of unrest seen across all MENA states during the Arab Spring.

Although this was carefully researched, these findings are in no way generalizable beyond the Arab Spring. As Delbert & Rohozinski (2010) point out, new media can be utilized to spur violent events by criminal organizations as well, especially given the situation with ISIS where militarized organizations are using the Internet as a platform to intimidate, recruit, and preach their lethal cause (Lynch, Freelon, & Aday, 2014). This study is solely focused on understanding the way new media functioned in promoting the nonviolent models set at a given duration of time and a given region. Additionally, the data used for this research relies on reporter accuracy and the timelines produced are likely not exhaustive. This leaves the possibility of utilizing information that is not completely accurate, given journalist’s struggles for information during the Arab Spring, and that some notable events may not have been taken into consideration. Furthermore, it is possible that the between new media and violent vs. nonviolent unrest is spurious. As mentioned before, the Arab World is not homogeneous, so other factors could explain this correlation.

Despite some concerns with generalizability and robustness, this study is valuable to the current understanding of new media’s place in the Arab Spring and to future research. For one, this study provides a new framework to understanding new media’s influence on the forms of unrest seen during the Arab Spring. It would be interesting for future studies to code the nature of conversations across the “cybersphere” for all MENA states during unrest to provide depth to this notion that new media fostered nonviolent dissent. Secondly, something that was mentioned
lightly that may deserve further understanding is that regimes learned from the failures of their neighbors and inserted greater online monitoring and censorship into their counterinsurgency strategy. This may yield answers to why nonviolent movements did not see success after Tunisia and Egypt. Lastly, if nothing else, the timelines provided with this research may contribute insights to future research on Arab Spring.
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Uppsala Conflict Data Program UCDP Conflict Encyclopedia: www.ucdp.uu.se/database, Uppsala University


Timeline of Events by Country

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key</th>
<th>Government Action</th>
<th>Civilian/Dissident Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Violent/stringent government repression</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Government Media Use/Censorship</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Government Concession</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Moderate violence/repressive action by/on behalf of government</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Defection/Factionalization</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Police/Military)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Violent Forms of Civil Resistance</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Media Utilization/Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Peaceful/Nonviolent Demonstration</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>ModerateDissident Violence</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

January 1, 2011 – December 31, 2011
(Tunisia begins December 2010)

**Timeline of Events**

**Tunisia Timeline**

2010 – censorship of govt criticism to dissuade criminal activity (Howard, 2014)

Dec 17, 2010- Bouazizi, jobless grad, sets fire to himself after police seize vegetable cart - results in mass youth riots. "Footage posted on the Facebook social network site showed several hundred protesters outside the regional government headquarters, with lines of police blocking them from getting closer to the building. It did not show any violence”
(“Witnesses report rioting,” 2010)

sparked 10 days of protest over graduate unemployment, living conditions, police brutality, human rights violations and corruption
(Borger, 2010; Rifai, 2011)

Dec 20, 2010- Al Juwayni, the Tunisian development minister, announced $10 million employment program. Despite this, protests continued.
(Rifai, 2011)

Dec 24, 2010 – Rapper el General is detained for posting “Rais El Bled,” the first revolutionary anthem, to his Facebook (Khatib & Lust, 2014)

Dec 27, 2010- Demonstrators across the country gather in several mass protests in show of solidarity, including over 1,000 in Tunis, the capital, demanding jobs
(Rifai, 2011)

Dec 29, 2010- Ben Ali vows to punish protesters/promises job creation and “also fired the country's communications minister, Oussama Romdhani, in a government reshuffle after saying that the violence was manipulated by foreign media and hurt the country's image”
(“Tunisian president vows,” 2010)

Nessma TV first private media outlet to cover protests after 12 days of gathering
(Rifai, 2011)

Jan 2, 2010- reported hackings of activists Facebook and email accounts
Jan 7, 2010- Authorities apprehend a group of bloggers, journalists, activists, and rapper in response to dissent  
(Rifai, 2011)

Jan 9 - 11 die in clashes with police; alleged police brutality 
(“Tunisia: 11 die,” 2011); more than 50 die over 1-week period in clashes between protesters and riot police (Khatib & Lust, 2014)

Jan dissident blogger interrogated/tortured
“...Amamou and his fellow bloggers circulated news and videos in the name of protesting against the repressive regime...”

Jan 11 – General Ammar refuses orders to shoot at protesters; leader of communist party detained (Khatib & Lust, 2014)

Jan 13 - unprecedented concessions and reforms promised and some formerly blocked websites available to public 
(Rifai, 2011)

Jan 14 - Ben Ali flees Tunisia and PM Mohamed Ghannouchi takes over as interim president

“...warned an email from the Free Tunis group, monitoring developments to circumvent an official news blackout “had been riveted by revelations of US views of the Ben Ali regime in leaked WikiLeaks cables last month.” 

(Rifai, 2011)

April 23 - Inspector denies slapping Bouazizi
Who does she blame? "The media – for me, that is the root of the problem. Not so much the Tunisian media, because they came under pressure from the government, but the reaction of the international media shocked me because they have a reputation for honesty.” --govt official blames media as agent for international attention

May 8 – Tunisia reinstates curfew after protests pushing government to move forward with democratic reform. “In the worst violence, on Friday, police using teargas and batons fought running battles with demonstrators. Officers beat and manhandled 15 journalists in what one union warned was a "possible return to the oppressive practices of the previous regime". Youths reportedly ransacked shops and burned cars in a poor Tunis suburb... (Govt excuse for police action?) Preparations for the country's first truly democratic elections, in July, have been marred by tension over whether members of Ben Ali’s regime could try to stop political change taking place. Demonstrators took to Avenue
Bourguiba in central Tunis for the fourth consecutive day on Sunday, demanding the interim government step down and warning that the ‘revolution must be protected’.”

(Chrisafis, 2011b)

May 19 – Post-humous recording of Bin Laden released on militant websites encouraging the mass uprisings and government opposition.

(Burke, 2011)

May 22 – “The page of one democracy activist, Jalal Brick, was taken down. In its place, a message read: “This web page has been filtered in accordance with a requisition from the examining magistrate at the request of the Tunis Military Tribunal”

(Howard, 2014)

May 25 – dissident blogger resigns ministerial position warns of continued censorship

“He recently complained of a return to internet censorship in Tunisia, warning against the government's decision to close four websites at the army's request.”

(Chrisafis, 2011c)

June 14 – Election postponed for three months due to lack of proper preparation and voter registration issues.

June 17 - Special on KasbaTV, filming the protest event and police brutality for public awareness and reaction. KasbaTV broadcasters claim that they do not have media in Tunisia, just puppets carrying out government interests and propaganda.

(“Tunisia six months on,” 2011)

July 18 – Protests continue throughout the country after police kill 14 yr old in Sidi Bouzid, 4 wounded in protests in Menzel Bourguiba; 200 set fire to police station in Tunis

(Khatib & Lust, 2014)

Oct 23 – elections held for National Constituent Assembly and presidency (Byrne, 2011)

Oct 28 – hundreds protest in Sidi Bouzid after the electoral commission annulled victories by candidates of the Popular Petition party

(Byrne, 2011)

December 13 – Moncef Marzouki sworn in as president of Tunisia

References:


**Egypt Timeline**

Jan 1, 2011 – Bomb kills 21 at an Egyptian Christian Church, resulting in hundreds of Christians clashing with police and Muslims.  
(Batty, 2011a)


Jan 25, 2011 – *Mass protests against Mubarek regime in Tahrir Square. “Protest organisers heavily relied on social media outlets such as Facebook and Twitter.” Govt shuts down Twitter and mobile and internet networks.*  
(“Timeline: Egypt’s revolution,” 2011)

Jan 26, 2011 – *Violent government repression; tear gas, beatings, arrests, torture, threats; hackers threaten cyber attacks if Egypt does not stop media censorship*  
(Shenker, 2011a)

Jan 27, 2014 – *Egypt cuts off communication via internet; “Tim Bray, an engineer at Google, tweeted: ‘I feel that as soon as the world can't use the net to watch, awful things will start happening.’”* (Arthur, 2011) *protesters set fire to a police post in Suez an clash w/ police*  
(Khatib & Lust, 2014)

Jan 28, 2014 – *ElBaradei says Mubarek Regime is “on its last leg.” “He said the lack of communications could hamper organisation of the demonstrations, planned to begin after Friday prayers. ‘I don't know what my hopes are for today,’ he said. ‘It would be hard with the communications cut off but I think a lot of people will be turning out.’ Organisers of the marches – dubbed ‘the Friday of anger and freedom’ – are defying a government ban on protests issued on Wednesday. They have been using social media to co-ordinate plans, and hope to rally even more than the tens of thousands who turned out on Tuesday in the biggest protests since 1977.”* (Shenker & Siddique, 2011); *Mubarek makes TV address promising democracy and government dismissal, police forces withdraw under attack*  
(Khatib & Lust, 2014) Internet information provider Renesys also observed "the virtually simultaneous withdrawal of all routes to Egyptian networks in the internet's global routing table". (Howard, 2014) – mitigating dissidence
Jan 29, 2011 - death toll from protest reach over 100, thousands wounded. Mubarak dismisses cabinet, but will not step down; protesters remain in Tahrir Square. “The San Francisco Chronicle has an interesting piece on the impact of the Egyptian government's shutdown of internet and mobile phone access there yesterday. It quotes IT expert Jim Cowie as saying the closure of 93% of Egypt's internet traffic could have a major economic impact on the country. 'It is astonishing because Egypt has so much potentially to lose in terms of credibility with the internet community and the economic world,' Cowie said. 'It will set Egypt back for years in terms of its hopes of becoming a regional internet power.' He said the long-term economic effects are unclear because 'we've never seen a country rebooted on this scale before.'” (social media was not only an organizing tool, but it channeled international interests, which, no matter how it was handled by the govt., applied pressure on the regime). Egyptian museum raided, however “Guardian reporter Jack Shenker earlier commented that the government might try to use public disorder as an excuse to step up their crackdown on the protests” (staged? - govt tactic). “A Facebook group has been set up listing protests at Egyptian embassies around the world.” “ ‘Things are very tense in Alexandria. Large protests are ongoing. The police stations appear to have all been burned. Yesterday, demonstrators tried to burn down the building of the intelligence services, but seem not to have succeeded. The army is not intervening - so far.’” - Violent protest- some intent to harm. Looting extremely prevalent. Turned chaos

“Eltahawy ... appealed to the media to not fall for what she described as a Mubarak regime plot to make the protests in Egypt seem like dangerous anarchy. "I urge you to use the words 'revolt' and 'uprising' and 'revolution' and not 'chaos' and not 'unrest, we are talking about a historic moment," she said. Moments later, as Ms. Eltahawy suggested that looting and damage to the Egyptian Museum in Cairo shown on Egyptian television was the work of "the police and the thugs of Hosni Mubarak," the lower third of the screen displayed the banner headline: "EGYPT IN CHAOS." She added, "Egyptians want to fix Egypt, they don't want to destroy Egypt." The network then displayed video from Egyptian state television of damage to the museum, which has been shown around the world on Saturday.” – perhaps govt use of the media for negative portrayal of protesters; Mubarek appoints VP, sign of succession (Batty & Olorenshaw, 2011)

Jan 30, 2011 – U.S. and allies deny support for Mubarek unless he allows for an “orderly transition”, Al-Jazeera ordered to end coverage of protests, (Shenker & Black, 2011)

Jan 31, 2011 – Army tells demonstrators they will not fire (“Timeline: Egypt’s revolution,” 2011)

Feb 1, 2011 – Mubarek says he will go, but not until end of term, “Mubarak promises reforms to the constitution, particularly Article 76, which makes it virtually impossible for independent candidates to run for office. He says his government will focus on improving the economy and providing jobs” Opposition refuses to negotiate until he stands down (“Timeline: Egypt’s revolution,” 2011)

Feb 2, 2011 – Mubarek supporters brutally attack protesters- (extra-government violence) Internet services are at least partially restored in Cairo after a five-day blackout aimed at stymieing protests.
“Google improves its speak2tweet technology for the people in Egypt.” “Pro-democracy protesters say the military allowed thousands of pro-Mubarak supporters, armed with sticks and knives, to enter the square.” (“Timeline: Egypt’s revolution,” 2011)

Feb 5 – “The leadership of Egypt’s ruling National Democratic Party resigns, including Gamal Mubarak, the son of Hosni Mubarak. The new secretary-general of the party is Hosam Badrawi, seen as a member of the liberal wing of the party.” (“Timeline: Egypt’s revolution,” 2011)

Feb 7 – “Egypt's government approve a 15 per cent raise in salaries and pensions in a bid to appease the angry masses.” Wael Ghonim, a Google executive and political activist arrested by state authorities, is released; some see him as a potential figurehead for the pro-democracy camp. (“Timeline: Egypt’s revolution,” 2011)

Feb 8 – “Suleiman also announces a slew of constitutional and legislative reforms, to be undertaken by yet to be formed committees” (“Timeline: Egypt’s revolution,” 2011)

Feb 9 – “Labour unions join protesters in the street, with some of them calling for Mubarak to step down while others simply call for better pay. Massive strikes start rolling throughout the country.”; “Thirty-four political prisoners, including members of the Muslim Brotherhood, were released on Tuesday, according to Egyptian state television;” “Human Rights Watch says that 302 people have been killed since the start of Egypt's pro-democracy uprising.” (“Timeline: Egypt’s revolution,” 2011)

Feb 10 – “The criminal court in Egypt has endorsed the decision of banning three former ministers from leaving the country and the government has also frozen their assets;” “The security chief for the Egyptian city of Wadi al-Jadid (New Valley) is sacked and the police captain who ordered police to shoot at protesters is arrested and will be tried.” (“Timeline: Egypt’s revolution,” 2011)

Feb 11 – Protests grow across Egypt after Mubarek repeats his intentions of staying in power the night before, ultimately resulting in Mubarek’s resignation, turning over the government to the military (“Timeline: Egypt’s revolution,” 2011)

Feb 25 – Middle East’s ‘day of rage’- Iraq holds protests against corruption, Yemen holds its largest pro-democracy rally, and Egypt gathers to stress accelerated reforms/transition (Sherwood & Finn, 2011)

March 8 – 13 killed, 140 wounded in clashes over burning of a church, international women’s day protest becomes violent as female protesters are attacked (Khatib & Lust, 2014)

March 21 – Egyptians vote for changes for parliamentary and presidential elections (Chulov, 2011)

April 8 – Protestors gather again in Tahrir Square urging further prosecution of Mubarek-era ministers, army chief, and immediate transition from military to civilian rule

April 9 – Soldiers, armed with clubs and rifles, attack protesters; at least 2 die; Youtube video account of attacks; “assault appears to have been triggered by the decision of several dozen Egyptian soldiers on Friday to defy orders and join a protest in the square to call for the removal of Field Marshal Mohammed Hussein Tantawi, who is titular head of the country”; “Although an army spokesman insisted the army had fired only “blanks” and not live rounds to warn protesters, images posted on social media sites appeared to show both blank and live shell casings. The force of around 300 soldiers honed in on a tent camp where protesters had formed a human cordon to protect army officers who had
joined them; “military issued a statement afterward blaming "outlaws" for rioting and violating the country's 2am to 5am curfew, and asserted that no one was harmed or arrested.” (Beaumont, 2011)

May 8 – Egypt pledges its commitment to justice and imposes strict law banning large gatherings outside places of worship after 12 die in Muslim-Christian clashes in the Imbaba neighborhood where a Coptic church was burned down. This in response to tensions and threat insecurity in post-revolutionary Egypt. (Black, 2011)

May 13 – “Tens of thousands of Egyptians returned to Tahrir Square in Cairo on Friday in a show of national unity against sectarian tension, and to demonstrate their solidarity with the Palestinian people.”

(Shenker, 2011b)

May 31 – “Today, online Egyptian media are reporting that noted blogger Hossam El-Hamalawy and TV presenter Reem Maged were scheduled to be questioned by the military prosecution for criticizing Egypt's ruling military on air” (Howard, 2014) – protecting leadership

June 3 – Egypt’s telecommunications company, Vodafone, receives sharp criticism through social media for an ad implicitly attributing the revolution to onke of their commercials, when Vodafone yielded to government orders in cutting off its service to Egyptians mid-protest. When referring to advertising using revolutionary imagery, one activist said, when the communications companies try it – the ones who handed out our personal information to state security, the ones who shut down our lines and who helped the government cut us off – it's too far. People are talking about compensation but we don't want money. We want to see people on trial.”

(Shenker, 2011c)

June 29 – 1,000 injured in struggle between protesters and military police over military junta’s slow and inefficient handling of the reform process, leading one political analyst to reason, “we are seeing the same tactics – tear gas, bullets, state violence – that Mubarak used, and more importantly we are hearing the same discourse from Egypt's interim rulers. 'This is a plot to destabilise the country, there are shadowy groups trying to sow discord,' claim the cabinet and the army generals, but where is this plot and who is writing it? In fact the only 'plot' is the anger of the people against a political elite that has initiated no real change, and a government that marginalises the poorest in Egyptian society and has little credibility in the eyes of the masses." (Shenker, 2011d)

July 5 – “Hundreds of Egyptians scuffled with security guards in a court in Cairo and blocked a major road for hours after a judge ordered the release of 10 police officers charged with killing protesters during the country's uprising.” Nearly five months later, only one police officer has been convicted in the deaths of more than 846 people killed in a government crackdown on protesters, despite “Footage posted on YouTube showed police officers at a police station in the main square opening fire on protesters.” “Egypt's prosecutor-general, Mahmoud Abdel-Meguid, ordered the court's decision overturned in an attempt to defuse anger. But a lawyer for the victims' families said the move was "illegal" because the prosecutor-general had no authority over the court. "They are trying to deceive the people to pacify them," said Amin Ramez, a lawyer. "The policemen are now at army headquarters seeking protection. If people saw them, they would tear them apart." (“Egypt clashes,” 2011)
July 8 – “Angered by the lack of progress, protesters reoccupied and erected tents in Tahrir Square on 8 July to pressure the military into bringing those accused of killing protesters during the 18-day uprising to trial and to persuade interim rulers to stick to their pledges of bringing social justice, civil liberties and democracy.” (Gilmore, 2011a)

July 10 – “Several thousand people flocked to Cairo's Tahrir Square after Sharaf's speech [which yielded little substantive promises]. Anti-government activists have taken control of the roads there and an open-ended sit-in began on Friday. By Sunday morning, access to the Mugamma – a giant concrete building on one side of the square that serves as the bureaucratic heart of the Egyptian state – had been blocked off, with some employees reportedly joining the protests.” (Shenker, 2011e)

July 12 – Explosion of Egypt’s main gas pipeline. “Although no group has yet claimed responsibility, Monday's attack also underscored the ongoing tension between the Cairo-based government and Egypt's Bedouin communities, who have complained of state-sponsored discrimination against them ever since Egypt reclaimed the Sinai peninsula from Israel in 1982. Activists claim that an official effort to "Egyptianise" northern Sinai through the resettlement of Nile valley dwellers on the peninsula has locked Bedouins out of jobs and housing opportunities and destroyed traditional ways of life” (Shenker, 2011f)

July 13 – Military postpones elections from September to November amid tensions. “Soon after the statement ended thousands of demonstrators surged out of Tahrir and towards the nearby parliament building and cabinet office, which are being guarded by the military, to express their dissatisfaction with SCAF and the country's de facto leader, Field Marshal Mohamed Hussein Tantawi. Chants of "the people want the downfall of the Marshal" and "we're not leaving, he is leaving" rang through the streets, but violence was avoided.” (Shenker, 2011g)

July 17 – “Egypt's embattled prime minister, Essam Sharaf, has fired several of his top ministers in the latest attempt to end mass nationwide protests against his government's slow pace of reform;” “Protesters have demanded that the interim cabinet be purged of all politicians linked to the Mubarak regime. They are also insisting that the executive power of the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (Scaf), which has controlled Egypt since February but is accused by many of deliberately stifling revolutionary progress, be curbed” (Shenker, 2011h)

July 24 – Hundreds of protesters were attacked by mob with knives, swords, and rocks, during march towards Cairo’s defense ministry. Although assailants were unidentified, they seemed sympathetic toward the leading generals and a military chopper lingered above during the attack; “Among those detained was a prominent Egyptian blogger and human rights researcher, Amr Gharbeia, who was seized by unidentified men as he attempted to leave the scene of the protest. He was incommunicado for several hours, prompting frantic calls for information on his whereabouts and international demands for his release, including from Amnesty International, his former employer. "I am home, safe and resting. Grateful for everybody," he later wrote on Twitter.” (Gilmore, 2011b)

August 1 – Troops violently retake Tahrir Square, making arrests, smashing tanks, firing weapons, and moving in tanks. Officials claim that they arrested “thugs.” Several local and international campaign organisations have published details of arbitrary arrests and subsequent military abuses since the fall of Mubarak more than six months ago.
August 5 – “An Egyptian trade union federation that was used by the government to repress labour activism has been dissolved, dismantling another powerful component of Hosni Mubarak’s dictatorship.” (Shenker, 2011i)

August 15 – Mubarek on trial in televised courthouse facing charges of profiteering, illegal business-handling in reference to Israeli gas exports, and the unlawful murder of protesters; violence ensues outside courthouse between opposition and supporters of past regime (30 injured); judge bans television broadcasting through rest of trial (Siddique & Owen, 2011)

Sept 1 – “Egyptian blogger Mikael Nabil Sanad has been on hunger strike since August 22. Arrested in March for a blog post in which he criticized the military, Sanad was sentenced to three years in prison by a military court. In July, he was told that it could take up to a year and a half to get a court date for appeal, according to the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ). On August 22, Sanad began a hunger strike, the details of which have been posted on a campaign site against military trials in Egypt. According to that same source, Sanad has been held in solitary confinement for more than a week.” (Howard, 2014) – political policing

Sept 9 – “more than 1,000 were hurt during street clashes with police and army troops after an angry mob attacked the embassy building;” “An Israeli official said the rampage marked a further deterioration of diplomatic ties between Israel and Egypt since the fall of Mubarak.” Egypt reinstates state of emergency (Batty, 2011b)

Sept 13 – Further court proceedings, however “The judge has closed the court for the testimonies, barring anyone from attending except lawyers. Not only are journalists forbidden to attend, they are not allowed to report anything on the testimony or even quote lawyers who attended the session” (lack of transparency?) (Weaver & Owen, 2011)

Sept 16 – “Egyptians have returned to Tahrir Square to rally against the military junta's reactivation of Mubarak-era emergency laws, which Amnesty International has described as the biggest threat to human rights in the country since the Mubarak era;” “the seven months since SCAF assumed power, several peaceful demonstrations have been violently broken up by soldiers, while media outlets and bloggers seen as critical of the junta have been taken off air or arrested.” (Shenker, 2011k)

Sept 28 – Elections announced to begin Nov. 28, yet many disgruntled over the rules leaving room for former regime members and religious dominance (“Egypt elections,” 2011)

Sept 30 – “thousands rally to force quicker democratic change”

Oct 6 – military unveils plans that could entail being in power until 2013

Oct 8 – Peaceful Christian march results in 24 dead from brutal military repression

Oct 18 – “[Maikel Nabil] Sanad, whom Amnesty International has declared to be a prisoner of conscience, was sentenced by a military tribunal in March to three years in jail after publishing a blog post entitled ”The people and the army were never one hand”. The online statement, which deliberately inverted a popular pro-military chant, infuriated Egypt's ruling generals who took power after the ousting of former president Hosni Mubarak, and have since been accused of multiple human rights violations in an effort to shut down legitimate protest and stifle revolutionary change;” “Blogger says he would rather commit suicide than sacrifice his freedoms (Shenker, 2011l)
Oct 26 – Policeman involved in beating and murder of Khaled Said sentenced to only 7 years; “Six months after Said's death in June 2010, a Facebook page created in his memory was used to call for the January protests that grew into the 18-day uprising that eventually toppled Mubarak;” “Photographs of Said's corpse were widely circulated, showing his body covered with bruises, his teeth broken and jaw smashed;” Said’s death is often compared to Bouazizi’s death in Tunisia (“Anger in Egypt,” 2011)

Oct 28 – A 24 year old prisoner torched to death after attempting to smuggle in a cell phone sim card. “a new Facebook page entitled We are all Essam Atta appeared online, and quickly attracted thousands of supporters. Activists and human rights campaigners flocked to social media sites to express their fury at Egypt's ruling generals, whom many now view as indistinguishable from the Mubarak regime they replaced.” (Shenker, 2011m)

Oct 31 – “Iaa Abd El Fattah, a 29-year-old who has been at the forefront of anti-regime struggles for a decade and was a political prisoner during the Mubarak era, was arrested on Sunday on charges of inciting violence against the military. He refused to recognise the legitimacy of his interrogators or answer their questions and is set to be held for 15 days, a period that can be renewed indefinitely by the authorities.” (Shenker, 2011n)

Nov 2 – “Military rulers have promised to pardon hundreds of civilians convicted in military courts, amid mounting pressure following the imprisonment of a leading revolutionary activist and the publication of a secret letter from his jail cell.” (Shenker, 2011o)

Nov 3 – Protesters seek help from the Occupy movement; “Thursday's communique, which was jointly signed by a number of activist groups and published on the website of the "No to military trials" campaign, Egyptian protesters say that while global media attention has shifted elsewhere since the toppling of Hosni Mubarak in February, their struggle has continued” (Shenker, 2011p)

Nov 18-25 – Egyptians take to Tahrir Square and military violently responds killing at least 33 with thousands injured; Egypt's cabinet offers resignation (21)

Nov 28 – first free elections in over 80 years, Muslim Brotherhood’s party wins majority

Dec 7 – Generals say they will have final say in constitution

Dec 17 – “Violent clashes between Egyptian security forces and pro-democracy protesters continued in Cairo for a second day with nine now confirmed dead and hundreds injured.” (Neild, 2011)

References:


Bahrain Timeline

Feb 14 – “Unrest in the Gulf island state of Bahrain on a "day of rage" organised by activists using Twitter and Facebook appeared to be similarly inspired by events in Cairo and Tunis but rooted in local factors, especially anger at discrimination against the Shia majority by the Sunni al-Khalifa dynasty;” one dies (Black, 2011a)

Feb 15 – One young man dies as police fire upon a funeral procession of over 10,000 for man who died day before; “Thousands of protesters descended on Pearl Roundabout in the capital Manama and set up tents in echoes of Cairo's Tahrir Square, pledging to stay until their demands are met. Protests began with a Day of Rage on Monday, and mass rallies are now expected after prayers on Friday. Bahrainis complained at the slowness of internet connections, fueling speculation that the government had forced service providers to throttle speeds to slow the dissemination of information;” “Bahrain's drama saw a personal intervention by King Hamad, who went on state TV... to express his condolences to the families of the two victims and to promise to verify the circumstances of their "regrettable" deaths;” “Bahrain's main Shia party, al-Wifaq, announced that it was withdrawing from parliament, where it has 18 of the 40 seats. "We decided to suspend our membership until further notice, after the aggressive attacks by the police on civilians demonstrating and carrying the kingdom's flag and calling for political and constitutional reforms," said leader Abdul-Jalil Khalil.” (Black, 2011b)

Feb 17 – 3 die in pre-dawn raid by security forces; police, numbering over 500, violently evacuated Pearl Roundabout, causing complete destruction of the camps; numbers had grown to around 4,000 by late afternoon, rallied by calls through social media and by a restless middle class, which until now had not been prominent in protests; “The interior ministry produced images that it said were proof of police officers recovering from knife wounds and beatings they had received during the clashes. The claim was hotly denied by the protesters who said they had no weapons, and they had been attacked as they slept. The Guardian had spent several hours at the camp before the attack, talking widely with those present, who were in a festive mood. There was no sign of belligerence, or of weapons.” “Bahrain's military was deployed throughout Manama, and tanks and armoured vehicles blocked access to the abandoned Pearl Roundabout. A virtual curfew was in effect, with the military saying they would disrupt any public gatherings. Roads were mostly empty and its businesses almost all shut.” (Chulov, 2011a)

Feb 18 – One confirmed dead after police and military personnel fire upon marching protestors, however one hospital official says, “It's very difficult to count the number of casualties. They were thrown on the road; there are tens if not hundreds of people still on the road. The ambulances can’t access them” (Chulov & Tran, 2011)
“Thousands of anti-government protesters in Bahrain have resumed an occupation of Pearl Square, the focal point of protests in the capital Manama.”

(“Bahrain unrest,” 2011)

18 opposition representatives in the al-Wafaq Shia bloc resign

(Khatib & Lust, 2014)

thousands gather at the National Unity Rally, a large demonstration organized by opposition groups

(Khatib & Lust, 2014)

Dozens injured in clash with troops

(Khatib & Lust, 2014)

Responding to demands for more democracy and an end to sectarian discrimination, Crown Prince Sheikh Salman bin Hamad al-Khalifa, has promised national dialogue, enhanced powers for parliament, electoral reform, and a nationwide referendum on any new deal. (Tisdall, 2011); GCC troops sent in, marking one of the last days of protest at Pearl Roundabout (Khatib & Lust, 2014)

(The streets of Bahrain's capital, Manama, have again erupted in violence as the kingdom's besieged monarch declared martial law and ordered troops - including Saudi forces - to take all measures to quell a festering rebellion. (Chulov, 2011b)

“The assault Wednesday, which left at least five people dead, was no more deadly than a nighttime raid on Pearl Square in February that killed at least four. But it appeared in some ways to deliver a more definitive blow to the protesters, followed not just by the curfew and arrests but by tougher government rhetoric and a heavier troop presence on the streets;” 6 opposition leaders who were working on negotiations with the government were arrested for inciting violence:

“The health minister, a Shiite, resigned Wednesday along with 12 judges from Bahrain’s Sharia Court, and the housing minister, also a Shiite, announced that he was “boycotting” the government, according to the opposition al-Wasat newspaper;” (Birnbaum, 2011)

Pearl Roundabout cleared again; Reporters from CNN, Doha News, and Alhurra TV were denied entry or forced to leave after attempting to report on dangerous security crackdown where forces were allegedly surrounding hospitals, denying treatment to injured. (“Access Denied,” 2014)

(Pearl Roundabout destroyed; “The giant white monument in the middle of Pearl Roundabout was brought down during Friday afternoon and the mound of grass that had been home for most of the last six weeks to thousands of demonstrators is now a pile of brown dirt.” (Chulov, 2011c)

Reporter for Press TV, Johnny Miller, was attacked by “progovernment thugs,” resulting in his camera equipment being destroyed and him being quickly deportd out of the country (“Press TV,” 2011)

Internet-organized protests occur in 9 locations throughout country

(Khatib & Lust, 2014)

11 more MP’s of al Wafaq resign, leaving only 7 remaining

(Khatib & Lust, 2014)

Police arrest blogger Mahmood al-Yousif (Khatib & Lust, 2014)

Al-Wasat, an independent newspaper, shutdown by govt. (Khatib & Lust, 2014)

Nabeel Rajab posted image on Twitter account showing bruises and gashes on man who died in custody; “Bahrain’s most prominent human rights activist has been summoned for questioning by a military prosecutor, after being accused of tampering
April 16 – “Since the Gulf soldiers came to Bahrain, life in the Shia villages and suburbs of the capital, Manama, has been non-stop intimidation, violence and threats. Even trying to move around in normal ways has become life-threatening. They are trying to beat down the opposition with a long campaign against us.” A personal account reveals the intense monitoring and violence used by Saudi officials and “thugs”, who although not always uniformed are identified through their voice. Almost constant sight of beatings and firing of rubber bullets and teargas in Shia neighborhoods. In addition, checkpoints setup throughout Bahrain’s capital where security officials ask a flurry of sectarian questions, search through personal cell phones and other belongings, and “they have pictures and names of all the people at Lulu and on the demonstrations and have posted them on Facebook with notices saying: ‘Bring these people to justice, they are guilty people.’”. This crackdown goes as far as limiting media and cell phone use: “I went towards a backstreet and tried to take a video, but a police car spotted me and started shooting birdshot. I ran away inside the village and they came after me. I hid in one of the private compounds and saw riot police running, looking for me.” – Not only monitoring of group activity, but individual (Mahmoud, 2011)

April 22 – Report released claiming “Bahraini authorities have conducted a systematic campaign of attacks and arrests against medical workers who treated injured protesters during months of unrest in the Gulf kingdom;” many doctors have been physically attacked and over 30 detained. Report adds, “’high-velocity weapons and shotguns’ have been used to fire birdshot, rubber bullets and teargas at unarmed civilians.” (Mahmoud, 2011)

April 28 - Four protesters are sentenced to death by firing squad, while many question presence of careful due process due to lack of transparency (Booth, 2011)

May 11 – 300 workers fired by Bahrain’s oil company for role in protests (Khatib & Lust, 2014)

May 23 – Activist Nabeel Rajab says that the govt has taken his uncle and subjected him to torture based off of his relation to Rajab (Khatib & Lust, 2014)

June 6 – 47 medical workers on placed on trial for treating protesters (Khatib & Lust, 2014)

June 29 – “Bahrain's king has ordered an independent fact-finding mission to establish whether protesters' human rights were abused during a violent crackdown on anti-government unrest in the Gulf kingdom.” (Ali, 2011)

July 2 – “Reconciliation talks between Bahrain’s Sunni-led government and the majority Shia opposition have begun after four months of protests against the regime.”

(“Bahrain opposition,” 2011)

Aug 8 – “The recent scene in Sitra, a short drive from central Manama, the capital, provided an ugly glimpse into the cat-and-mouse routine of protests and repression in this Gulf island

with photographs of a man who died in custody last week;’” “They want to do their crimes in secret,’ Rajab said. ‘I am one of the few human rights activists who has not yet been arrested and the government wants to silence me and prevent me from doing my work.’”; “In December, Rajab's computer was confiscated as he was about to board a plane at Bahrain international airport. It was returned with the power on, indicating that information may have been downloaded or copied;” “Bahrain’s public prosecutor has begun questioning three senior journalists sacked from the Gulf kingdom's only opposition newspaper over accusations that they falsified news about the government's treatment of protesters;” “On 4 April, two Iraqi journalists working for Al Wasat, Raheem al-Kaabi and Ali al-Sherify, were deported without trial.” (Tran, 2011)
state. Filmed secretly, posted on YouTube and distributed on Twitter, it exposes what Bahrain's western-backed government prefers foreigners not to see.”; Many argue that repression continues to get worse; One local photographer claims, “‘[citizen journalists] are doing our job for us . . . They set up webcams in the villages where there are clashes. It's hard to get in and if you do you risk being arrested or hit by a tear gas grenade or worse. If the police catch you they make you erase your pictures. It happened to me once. After all, they are the ones with the guns.’” (Black, 2011c)

Oct 7 – “Bahraini security forces have used teargas to break up anti-government protests at the death of a teenage boy who opposition groups claim was killed by police gunfire in the Gulf island kingdom.” (“Bahrain police,” 2011)

Oct 11 - the editors of 4 private newspapers are fined for publishing “fake” stories (Khatib & Lust, 2014)

Nov 23 – “Bahrain's western-backed security forces used "excessive force" and torture during the crackdown on the Pearl revolution this year, according to a critical official report [PDF]published as new protests erupted in the Gulf state.” (Black, 2011d)

Dec 16 – “activists were outraged by the arrest of a 28-year-old blogger and campaigner who was staging a peaceful protest on the outskirts of the capital, Manama, on Thursday” (Davies & Quinn, 2011)

References:


Saudi Arabia Timeline

Jan 9 – “A group of 250 unemployed Saudi university graduates staged a rare protest in the capital Riyadh, and the group's spokesman vowed on Sunday to keep up the demonstrations till the Gulf Arab state creates jobs for them.” (“Saudi protests,” 2011)

Jan 21 – Man in his sixties immolates himself (Khatib & Lust, 2014)

Jan 29 – After 10 people die in a flood, protesters gather in Jeddah over poor city infrastructure (Khatib & Lust, 2014)

Feb 5 – About 40 women gather in Riyadh demanding release of prisoners held without a fair trial (Khatib & Lust, 2014)

Feb 10 – Moderate scholars and intellectuals petition for acknowledgment of what would be Saudi Arabia’s first political party, the Islamic Umma Party (Khatib & Lust, 2014)

Feb 16 – Authorities arrest group of people that have to do with Umma party (Khatib & Lust, 2014)

Feb 17 – Shiite activists protest in Qatif demanding the release of three prisoners; released three days later (Khatib & Lust, 2014)
Feb 23 – *As a preemptive measure to quell protests, King Abdullah announces $37 billion aid package* (Khatib & Lust, 2014)

March 4 – *More than 17,000 people join a Facebook group calling for protests in Qatif, Riyadh, and Hofuf* (Khatib & Lust, 2014)

March 6 – *Public protests banned following Shiite protests in the eastern kingdom* (Khatib & Lust, 2014)

March 11 – “*Saudi security forces came out in strength in Riyadh on a "day of rage" organized by pro-democracy campaigners who managed only small demonstrations in the eastern provinces.*” (Black, 2011)

March 16 – “*Saudi Shi'ites marched in the kingdom's oil-producing east Wednesday, demanding the release of prisoners and voicing support for Shi'ites in nearby Bahrain, an activist and witnesses said;*” “*Web activists had slated March 11 as the first day for mass protests around the country in favor of democratic government and a constitutional rather than absolute monarchy. But a religious ruling banning demonstrations and a heavy police crackdown appeared to have intimidated most potential protesters*” (“Saudi Shi‘ites protest,” 2011)

March 18 – “*Saudi Arabia's king promised a multibillion-pound package of reforms, pay rises, cash, loans and apartments on Friday in what appeared to be the Arab world's most expensive attempt to appease residents inspired by the unrest that has swept two leaders from power.*” (“Saudi Arabia’s King,” 2011)

March 25 – “*Hundreds of Saudi Shi'ites staged a protest in the kingdom's oil-producing Eastern Province Friday calling for prisoner releases and a withdrawal of Saudi forces from Bahrain, activists said*” (Benham, 2011)

April 10 - “*Dozens of unemployed university graduates and teachers staged rare protests in [Jeddah and Riyadh] on Sunday to demand jobs and better wages in the biggest Arab economy, which is struggling to reduce joblessness*” (Alsharif & Benham, 2011)

June 29 – “*Five Saudi women have been arrested after defying the kingdom's ban on women drivers, an activist has said*” (“Five Saudi women,” 2011)

Aug 6 – *Security forces kill man after he fires upon the Interior of Ministry palace* (Khatib & Lust, 2014)

Sept 25 – *Women get right to vote in 2015, King Abdullah calling it a “cautious reform”* (Chulov, 2011)

Oct 5 – “*Pro-democracy protests which swept the Arab world earlier in the year have erupted in eastern Saudi Arabia over the past three days, with police opening fire with live rounds and many people injured, opposition activists say;*” “*They say unrest began on Sunday in al-Awamiyah, a Shia town of about 25,000 people, when Saudi security forces arrested a 60-year-old man to force his son – an activist – to give himself up;*” 14 injured (Cockburn, 2011)

Oct 23 – “*Three young film-makers are still in detention a week after being arrested for posting a film about poverty in Saudi Arabia on the internet*” (Hill, 2011)

Nov 14 – *clashes continue in Qatif leaving 4 dead* – joint action (Khatib & Lust, 2014)

Dec 23 – *30 men and 30 women arrested for participating in silent protest in the capital city calling for the release of a controversial cleric* (Khatib & Lust, 2014)

References:
Libya Timeline

Jan 14 – Likely fearing further anti-government sentiment in his own country, “the Libyan leader, Muammar Gaddafi, has condemned the uprising in neighbouring Tunisia amid reports today of unrest on the streets of Libya” on national television. (Weaver, 2011)

February 15/17 - Day of Revolt; “The first major protests and violent clashes in Libya actually began two days before this, on February 15, mostly in Benghazi. Hundreds gathered outside the police station, and a number of protesters were killed. But February 17 was the official "day of revolt," an effort to bring thousands of protesters into the streets. Major demonstrations were reported in Benghazi, Ajdabiya, Darnah and Zintan, among others; Gaddafi forces responded by firing live ammunition at the crowds. More than a dozen demonstrators were killed.” (“Battle for Libya,” 2011)

“‘There are thousands of people in the centre of town, and it is spreading, and they are being repressed,’ said Ramadan Jarbou, a leading local journalist; “‘Libyan state media maintained a news blackout, but opposition groups used Facebook, Twitter and other social media networks to send out reports and images of demonstrations and clashes” “Internet access was blocked and hospitals were said be running short of medical supplies.” “Crucially, however, there was no sign of any organised protests in Tripoli.
where state TV showed crowds waving green flags and shouting pro-regime slogans.”

“This time their demands are for jobs, opportunities and political freedoms.”


February 18-19 – “Thousands more take to the streets in Benghazi; dozens of people now have reportedly been killed by security forces;” “Libya’s Arab League representative, Abdel-Moneim al-Houni, resigns.” “Ambassador to the U.S. Ali Adjali resigns and states that he is no longer representing the government of Gadhafi.” “Libyan diplomats at the U.N., including Libyan Deputy Ambassador Ibrahim Dabbashi, take the side of the opposition and demand the removal of ‘the tyrant Moammar Gadhafi.’” (“Libya civil war,” 2014)

February 20 – “Rebels take Benghazi. After several days of fighting, and hundreds of people killed, anti-Gaddafi fighters seized control of Libya’s second city. Cities further east, including Baida and Tobruk, were already under rebel control at this point. Doctors at Benghazi’s ill-equipped hospitals said more than 300 people were killed in several days of fighting, which included numerous attacks on funeral processions. The key event in the battle for Benghazi was the fall of the Katiba, the city’s well-stocked military garrison staffed by (among other units) the feared Khamis Brigade. Fighters armed with rifles and homemade bombs laid siege to the garrison for several days, and a reported suicide car bomber eventually blew a hole in the building’s gate, allowing the fighters inside.” (“Libya civil war,” 2014)

February 21 – “Two Libyan fighter pilots land their jets in Malta and request asylum, defecting after being ordered to bomb civilians.” (“Libya civil war,” 2014) “[Gaddafi] arrested Libyans who had previously given phone interviews to the media and made it a crime to speak to foreign journalist.” “(Brannon, 2011) “The Libyan government has tried to impose a blackout on information from the country. Foreign journalists cannot enter. Internet access has been almost totally severed, though some protesters appear to be using satellite connections. Much news about what is going on came from telephone interviews with people inside the country. Several residents reported that cellphone service was down, and even landline phone service sporadic.” (Kirkpatrick, 2011)

February 23 – Jammed Al Jazeera’s coverage (Brannon, 2011)

February 26 – “Former Justice Minister Mustafa Mohamed Abud al Jeleil announces the formation of an interim government to lead the eastern regions under opposition control.” (“Libya civil war,” 2014)

March 4 – “As fighting inside the country intensifies, Libya's links to the net appear to have been completely severed.” Libyans had been making use of YouTube to expose the conflict, but now “this meant that not only was Libya cut off from the net, but those inside the country would not be able to send messages or browse sites either. (“Libya removes itself from the net,” 2011)

March 8 – “Jammed signals from the local news program Al-Arabiya and a majority of Saudi owned MBC network.” (Brannon, 2011)

March 9 – “a BBC news crew was beaten and lined up against a wall by the soldiers, and then shot” (Brannon, 2011)

March 10 – “Gaddafi bombs Brega; retakes Zawiyah, Bin Jawad. Further west, though, the early weeks of the war did not go well for the rebels;” “Gaddafi delivered several memorable speeches on Libyan state TV in late February and early March. He often
blamed the protests on foreign intervention, and threatened to hunt down the protesters - "alley to alley, house to house."

March 19 – “NATO starts bombing Libya.” (“Battle for Libya,” 2011) “Mohammad Nabbous, face of citizen journalism in Libya, is killed” He was running an independent internet TV station (Wells)

May 15 - “Gaddafi forces withdraw from Misrata.” (“Battle for Libya,” 2011) “Libyan TV claims its forces have retaken the town of Ajdabiya, but rebel forces dispute this.” “Libyan opposition forces appoint former Interior Minister Abdel Fattah Younes al Abidi as head of the rebels' armed forces. (“Libya civil war,” 2014)

May 18 – “Libyan Foreign Minister Moussa Koussa announces a cease-fire. However, witnesses report government attacks on Misrata and in eastern Libya” (“Libya civil war,” 2014)

May 19 – “Government and opposition troops battle with mortars, artillery fire and tanks in Benghazi.” “French fighter jets begin enforcing the no-fly zone over Libya, and the U.S. launches more than 100 Tomahawk missiles at targets in Libya in Operation Odyssey Dawn.” (“Libya civil war,” 2014)

April 4 – “Foreign Minister Franco Frattini announces that Italy will become the third country, after France and Qatar, to recognize the rebel Libyan National Transitional Council as the legitimate international representative of Libya.” (“Libya civil war,” 2014)

April 6 – “An oil tanker under the control of the Libyan opposition departs the port of Tobruk, bound for Qatar. It is the first known rebel oil export.” (“Libya civil war,” 2014)

April 7 – “Gaddafi decided to deport 26 foreign journalists who had previously been invited to Tripoli.” (Brannon, 2011)

April 20 – “Saif al-Islam Gadhafi speaks on state TV and says that a new Libyan constitution will be unveiled after the civil war ends.” (“Libya civil war,” 2014)

May 5 – “The Libya Contact Group, which includes the U.S., France, Great Britain, Italy, Qatar, Kuwait and Jordan, agrees to set up a fund the provide money to the Libyan rebels.” (“Libya civil war,” 2014)

May 12 – “this week Italy’s news has been flooded with reports of a bomb exploding on the bunker of Gadaffi. Yet, when I attempt to re-confirm this news, I have no proof through the mainstream American and international media, that the bombing has actually occurred;” “The local citizens attempt to report from the inside, through videos, and using Twitter. They can do this by leaving a voicemail on an international phone numbers and the service will tweet the message. However, the tweets have caused some confusion, leaders would post on tweet as well as the protestors. A flood of messages and users rushed to re-post the references to it, yet there have been numerous unconfirmed reports.”

May 13 – “Gadhafi releases a brief audio message saying he's in a place where he cannot be found or killed.” (“Libya civil war,” 2014)

March 18 – “Four journalists are released by the Libyan military after spending several weeks in custody: Americans Clare Morgana Gillis, a freelancer for the Christian Science Monitor, the Atlantic and USA Today; and James Foley of GlobalPost. The others are Spanish photographer Manuel Varela, who also goes by the name Manu Brabo, and British journalist Nigel Chandler” (“Libya civil war,” 2014)
May 31 – “Five Libyan generals tell a news conference in Rome they are among as many as 120 Libyan military officers and soldiers who have defected within the last few days.” (“Libya civil war,” 2014)

June 1 – “The U.N. Human Rights Council announces that during a fact-finding mission, it found evidence of war crimes and crimes against humanity committed by Gadhafi's forces.” (“Libya civil war,” 2014)

June 10 – “Margot Wallstrom, special representative of the Secretary-General on sexual violence in conflict, charges that rape is being used as a weapon of war in Libya.” (“Libya civil war,” 2014)

June 17 – “Gadhafi’s son, Saif al-Islam, tells an Italian newspaper that Libya is open to the idea of national elections, and that his father would step down if he lost. The Libyan opposition, NATO and the U.S. reject the offer;” “Libyan TV airs the audio of a speech by Moammar Gadhafi, again vowing to defeat NATO and opposition forces” (“Libya civil war,” 2014)

Aug 15 – “Gadhafi urges Libyans to fight opposition forces and "cleanse this sweet and honorable land." In a speech broadcast on state television, Gadhafi says: "The strikes will be over and NATO will be defeated. Move always forward to the challenge; pick up your weapons; go to the fight in order to liberate Libya inch by inch from the traitors and from NATO. Be prepared to fight if they hit the ground." (“Libya civil war,” 2014)

Aug 20 – “Libyan rebels have taken their fight inside Tripoli, home to the embattled Libyan leader, a rebel spokesman says. Government spokesman Musa Ibrahim insists that all is safe and well. He says the Libyan capital remains under government control. Libyan officials reject rebel claims that Gadhafi is seeking refuge for his family, saying that neither the leader nor his wife and children plan to leave the country.” (“Libya civil war,” 2014)

Aug 21 – Government spokesman Musa Ibrahim says some 1,300 people are killed and about 5,000 wounded in 12 hours of fighting. (“Libya civil war,” 2014)

Aug 23 – “A spokesman for the National Transitional Council claims that rebels control 85 percent of Tripoli. Rebel sources say Libya's National Transitional Council has established a small office on the outskirts of Tripoli. Gadhafi's Bab al-Aziziya compound is seized by rebel fighters. Mahmoud Shammam, minister of information for the National Transitional Council, says NATO has 'hit some targets' in the compound. Rebels battle forces loyal to Gadhafi Tuesday north of Tripoli International Airport, along the main road into the capital. Gadhafi forces, meanwhile, pose as rebels in Tripoli.” (“Libya civil war,” 2014)

Aug 24 – “International journalists, including CNN's Matthew Chance, are released from Tripoli's Rixos hotel, where they have been held for five days by Gadhafi forces.” (“Libya civil war,” 2014)

Aug 30 – “Rebel commander Hisham Abu Hajer claims that more than 50,000 Libyans have been killed in the uprising.” (“Libya civil war,” 2014)

Sept 16 – “The U.N. Security Council unanimously adopts a resolution to establish a support mission for Libya for the next three months.” (“Libya civil war,” 2014)

Oct 20 – “Moammar Gadhafi is killed after being captured by rebel forces in his hometown Sirte, Libya.” (“Libya civil war,” 2014)

Oct 23 – “Libya's interim leaders declare the nation's freedom in Benghazi, where uprisings against Gadhafi's regime began in February.” (“Libya civil war,” 2014)
Oct 31 – “NATO secretary general announces the official end of the NATO mission in Libya.” (“Libya civil war,” 2014)

Nov 23 – Some leading tribal clans announce that they will not recognize the new govt., telling of the tribal dynamics in Libya (Khatib & Lust, 2014)

Dec 13 – “Protesters set up tent city in Benghazi and call for interim government to make its membership and voting decisions public” (Stephen, 2011)

References:


Syria Timeline

Jan 26 – Hassan Ali Akeley self-immolates (Khatib & Lust, 2014)

Feb 5 – In al-Hasakah hundreds protest for political reform and an end to emergency law. However, despite many protests planned, none build to desired numbers, which is telling of the “far-reaching and strict security measures, presumed presidential popularity, and a fear of the aftermath of sectarian violence” (Khatib & Lust, 2014) – or maybe new media access problem?
Feb 8 – *Facebook and Youtube are unblocked by the government for the first time in 5 years* (Presse, 2011)

March 6 – *several boys arrested for anti-regime graffiti* (Khatib & Lust, 2014)

March 15 – “Violence flares in Daraa after a group of teens and children are arrested and tortured for writing political graffiti. Dozens of people are killed when security forces crack down on demonstrations” (“Syria civil war,” 2014); 3000 arrested (Khatib & Lust, 2014)

March 21 – “protests spread from Daraa to Jasim, Baniyas, Homs, and Hama”; police fire live rounds into crowds (Khatib & Lust, 2014)

March 23 – “Syrian forces killed at least six people on Wednesday in an attack on a mosque in the southern city of Deraa, site of unprecedented protests, residents said;” “Before the attack, electricity was cut off in the area and telephone services were severed;” “An AFP photographer and videographer in Daraa said their car was stopped in the old town and their equipment confiscated.” (“Syria forces kill 6,” 2011)

March 24 – “In response to continuing protests, the Syrian government announces several plans to appease citizens. State employees will receive an immediate salary increase. The government also plans to study lifting Syria's long standing emergency law and the licensing of new political parties” (“Syria civil war,” 2014)

March 25 – Protests continue throughout country in what they call the “Friday of Glory;” Reports claim to this point there have been 25 protester deaths in Sanamayn, 3 in Tafas, 17 in Daraa, 40 near the Omari Mosque, 4 in Latakia, and 3 in Damascus (Khatib & Lust, 2014)

March 29 – hundreds of thousands march in support of President Assad; al-Otari resigns as PM (Khatib & Lust, 2014)

April 9 – “Tens of thousands of protesters turned out across the country Friday, spreading for the first time in large numbers to Aleppo, the country's second-largest city. The result was more violence. In the southern city of Dara, the epicenter of the unrest, security forces fired on protesters, killing at least 22 people and wounding hundreds more. Four more were killed in clashes with security forces in the western city of Hims, witnesses said.” (Therolf, 2011)

April 21 – “Al-Assad lifts the country's 48-year-old state of emergency. He also abolishes the Higher State Security Court and issues a decree ‘regulating the right to peaceful protest, as one of the basic human rights guaranteed by the Syrian Constitution.’” (“Syria civil war,” 2014)

April 22 – Violent mass demonstrations across Syria's cities, towns and villages were met with indiscriminate gunfire by security forces loyal to President Bashar Assad, killing dozens of people and hardening the divide between a regime determined to keep power and increasingly fearless protesters demanding the overthrow of the government; “Amateur video posted on the Internet showed panicked protesters fleeing for cover as Assad's plainclothes and uniformed security officials, sometimes positioned on rooftops, fired on unarmed demonstrators. Video showed a dead man allegedly shot by security forces lying near the city center of Damascus. Another gruesome video, reportedly taken from the southern city of Izra, showed a man carrying a boy with blood pouring from his head after he had been shot by security officials. ‘Oh God! Oh God!’ a man yelled in despair.” (Daragahi, 2011a)

May 13 – “In a striking show of strength, the popular movement opposing Syrian President Bashar Assad took to the streets in large numbers nationwide, defying a campaign of violence and mass detentions by security forces;” “According to a trove of video uploaded to the Internet, protests broke out from the coastal city of Baniyas to the far eastern cities of Dair Alzour; in the ethnic Kurdish cities of Qamishli and Amouda; and in restive suburbs and satellite cities that ring Damascus. In one video recorded in the village of Kafr Nabil, onlookers are seen tossing rose petals at protesters marching by;” “In one bit of video said to have been recorded in Damascus, shots are heard as protesters run for cover. "They are killing someone over there!" a man shouts.” (Daragahi, 2011b)

May 28 – 13 yr old martyr returned to family after being abused and mutilated. Internet media circulates the boys story motivating further protest, with the boy becoming national an international hero (Khatib & Lust, 2014)

June – “The government says that 120 members of the security forces have been killed by ‘armed gangs’ in the northwestern town of Jisr al-Shughour.” (“Syria profile, 2014)

June 3 – “The unrest in Syria continues and as of this morning it seems that the Syrian government has shutdown about of all Syrian networks;” “As of this morning only 19 of the normally 56 Syrian prefixes are routed.” (BGPmon; Khatib & Lust, 2014) “Syria, appears to be putting down an internal uprising with brutal efficiency. Foreign journalists are banned from travelling into Syria. A trickle of information about strikes and crackdowns passes over a disrupted and slow local net” (Howard, 2014) “A member of the Syrian activist group the Local Coordination Committees in Syria (LCCSyria) told Babylon & Beyond that the group had names of 24 people killed in Friday's protests in Hama. The Associated Press reported that 34 people were killed in the city on Friday. Snipers were positioned on the rooftops of buildings in various Hama neighborhoods and the death toll was expected to rise, according to activist reports.” (“Syria: Many deaths reported,” 2011)

June 6 – “The report was presented on the same day that Renesys Blog, the blog of Internet transparency firm, Renesys, reported that approximately two-thirds of all Syrian networks became unreachable from the global Internet. Renesys Blog confirmed that seven of the 40 Syrian networks were back online Saturday, June 4.” (Howard, 2014) – election crisis

June 10 – “At least 48 people were reported to have been killed, according to pro-democracy activists, as government forces sought to quell protests in dozens of Syrian cities and towns, including Damascus, the capital;” “In amateur video posted on the Internet and said to be from Homs, Syrian soldiers can be seen kicking and stomping a blindfolded victim who is crying for help and wailing in pain.” (Daragahi & Hajjar, 2011a)

July – “President Assad sacks the governor of the northern province of Hama after mass demonstration there, eventually sending in troops to restore order at the cost of scores of lives;” Opposition activists meet in Istanbul to form a unified opposition. (“Syria profile, 2014)

July 4 – “Syrian tanks, troops and bulldozers on Monday swept into a city that has long been a potent symbol of the nation's pro-democracy movement, raiding houses and hunting down activists opposed to President Bashar Assad's rule;” “Of course the opposition is
not united,’ said longtime activist Louay Hussein. ‘Years ago the repression in the country made it difficult for any monolithic opposition to form. The opposition was never united to be separated. It is not shameful to have more than one voice.’” (Daragahi & Bajjar, 2011b)

July 22 – **Mass protests result in clash with police, leaving eight dead** (Khatib & Lust, 2014)

July 29 – “Col. Riad Asaad, a defector from the Syrian army, announces (video announcement) the formation of the Free Syrian Army for ‘freedom, dignity and the fall of the regime.’ Massive protests are reported across Syria, as opposition activists gear up for increased confrontations expected the following week with the start of the Muslim holy month of Ramadan.” (“Uprising in Syria, 2014)

July 30 – “Massive protests after midday prayers erupted across Syria, including some of the largest seen so far in the symbolically potent northwestern city of Hama, where thousands were killed in a 1982 government crackdown, and the besieged far eastern city of Dair Alzour, on the Euphrates River. Tens of thousands gathered there to call on the international community to take a stand against President Bashar Assad, whose father was responsible for the 1982 bloodshed. "Your silence is killing us," was the message protesters posted on social media websites.” (Daragahi & Sandels, 2011)

Aug 10 – **Led by former minister of information Mohommed Salman, forty-one former and current officials announce an initiative for transition** From this point forward, violent clashes from both sides becomes commonplace and public talks and attitudes turn toward the Free Syrian army, pulling the rug out from under the peaceful demonstrations (Khatib & Lust, 2014)

Aug 13 – “Syrian security forces cracking down on opposition strongholds in Latakia herded thousands of people into a stadium and took away their identification cards and cellphones, activists said Monday.” (Daragahi & Hajjar, 2011c)

Aug 28 – “One third of the 98 bloggers surveyed by Harvard's Berkman Center for Internet and Society in May said they have been threatened for their opinions and one fifth reported that their online accounts have been hacked. Almost a tenth of the respondents admitted to being arrested or detained for their online activity.” (Howard, 2014)

Aug 31 – “The state exercises strict internet censorship and blocks many global websites with local appeal, including Facebook and YouTube, as well as opposition site” (Howard, 2014) – political policing

Sept 23 – “Now, amidst a new wave of protests, the Syrian government has reverted to their old methods, blocking WordPress on at least one ISP. But as one circumvention-savvy Syrian Twitter user said, "They blocked WordPress… as if people are still using the Syrian proxy." If you want to help support Syrian Internet users, one thing you can do is set up a Tor relay.” (Howard 2014)

Oct 2 – “A new alignment of Syrian opposition groups establishes the Syrian National Council, a framework through which to end President al-Assad's government and establish a democratic system.” (“Syria civil war,” 2014)

Nov – “**Army defectors target a military base near Damascus in the Free Syrian Army's most high-profile attack since protests began.** Government supporters attack foreign embassies.” (“Syria profile, 2014)

Dec 24 – “In a dramatic twist in the nine-month uprising against Syrian President Bashar Assad, government officials said Friday that two suicide car bombers detonated hundreds of pounds of explosives in front of buildings used by intelligence agencies in the heart of
Damascus, the capital;” “Officials quickly pointed the finger at Al Qaeda, saying the dramatic escalation in violence confirms their contention that armed terrorists are behind the unrest” “The Interior Ministry said 44 people were killed and 166 injured;” “But many opposition activists accused the government of staging the entire scene for an advance team from the Arab League, which had arrived hours before to prepare for an observer mission to determine whether Syria is fulfilling its pledge to end a deadly crackdown on antigovernment protesters who have been holding major demonstrations since March.” (Zavis & Paul, 2011)

Dec 30 – Over 6 million across the country participate in protests against Assad; Security forces attack protesters in each if these locations; According to the UN, over 5,000 protesters killed since the uprising began (Khatib & Lust, 2014)

References:
SYRIA: Many deaths reported as thousands march in 'Friday of the children of freedom' protests. (2011, June 3). Retrieved March 14, 2015, from


Algeria Timeline

Jan 7 – “At least two people have been killed and 300 others injured in riots that erupted across Algeria amid rising food prices and a housing crisis, state-run media said Saturday.” (“2 killed,” 2011) “Protesters ransacked government buildings, bank branches and post offices in several eastern cities, including Constantine, Jijel, Setif and Bouira, on Thursday night and Friday morning, the official news agency said.” (Chikhi, 2011)

Jan 8 – “Algeria’s government said it would slash the cost of some staple foods on Saturday to try to quell four days of rioting, triggered by price rises, which killed two people and wounded several hundred.” (Chikhi, 2011)

Jan 16 – “Echoes of the unrest were also heard from Algeria, where a man burned himself to death in an apparent copycat suicide that echoed the young Tunisian Mohamed Bouazizi, whose death sparked off the trouble in mid-December.” “Riots erupted after he died of his burns on Saturday.” (Black, 2011)

Feb 11 – “the eve of one of these rallies, the Algerian authorities also brought in for questioning Messrs. Kateb Said, Akrem el-Kebir, Ait Tayab Hassan, Bouha Yacine and Ms. Chouicha Sihem, members of the LADDH section in Oran, while they were distributing leaflets calling for the march. They were released two hours later without charge” (FIDH)

Feb 12 – “Algerian police have beaten back around 2,000 demonstrators who tried to rally in central Algiers as aftershocks from the Egyptian revolution rumbled throughout the Middle East; 400 arrested under protest ban (Chulov, 2011) “Internet provision was blocked in parts of Algeria and there were claims of Facebook accounts being deleted as thousands of pro-democracy demonstrators were arrested in violent street demonstrations” (Ramdani, 2011)

Feb 19 – “Some 2,000 demonstrators again challenged the ban on protests in Algiers on Saturday. Yet, some were beaten and protestors were outnumbered by the reported 30,000 police that would not allow them in the 1st of May square” (Bennoune, 2011)

Feb 23 – “the state of emergency - in force in Algeria for 19 years - was lifted” However, “Ordinance No. 11-02, adopted on the same day that the emergency rule was lifted, legalised the “safe house arrest” in incommunicado detention, of people suspected of terrorism or subversive acts.” (FIDH)
March 15 – “Nobody was particularly surprised when Algeria's state-operated radio channel announced that court clerks, who had been on strike for the previous month, had been awarded a 110% pay rise. In a bid to ward off the threat of further unrest, the government is creaming off oil revenue to satisfy demands from teachers, magistrates and police.” (Mandraud, 2011)

March 16 – “Police in the Algerian capital used tear gas on Wednesday to disperse a crowd of young men who were throwing petrol bombs and stones.” “Wednesday’s protest began when about 60 young men, most of them from the working class Diar el Mahsoul neighbourhood, blocked a road and demanded a meeting with senior officials about their living conditions” (“Algeria police use tear gas,” 2011)

April 15 – “Algeria’s president said Friday that he would seek revisions to the country's constitution as part of a broad push for democratic reforms, the leader's latest bid to soothe lingering tensions and demonstrations in the North African nation.” (Faucon, 2011)

Sept 14 – “Algeria has announced plans for reforming stringent media laws in order to allow for private radio and television stations to operate for the first time since 1962. The cabinet of President Abdelaziz Bouteflika also pledged to stop jailing journalists for libel, and to free those already imprisoned on libel charges. A new commission will be created in order to regulate the press, rather than being under the control of the justice ministry, and the group would also include journalists. Newspapers could still face banning or suspension on the basis of ‘threatening state security’” (Yasin, 2011)

December 14 – Algeria passes new media law; “Although the act does away with prison sentences for journalists, opens up the audio-visual sector to private companies and includes a provision for new authorities to govern the press, it also places numerous restrictions on the free exercise of reporters, particularly in terms of access to sources of information” (Fethi, 2011)

References:


**Jordan Timeline**

Jan 28 – “thousands of people demanded political change in the capital, Amman. Trade unionists calling for political and economic reform joined a protest organised by an Islamic group.” (Beaumont, 2011)

Feb 1 – “King Abdullah of Jordan has dismissed his cabinet and appointed a new prime minister amid large street protests.” (“Jordan protests,” 2011)

Feb 15 – Interior minister announces that protests will no longer need permission

(Khatib & Lust, 2014)

Feb 25 – “In the capital, Amman, 5,000 protested, demanding political reform. ‘Reform has become a necessity that cannot wait,’ said Sheikh Hamza Mansour, the head of the Islamic Action Front, the country’s largest opposition group, at a rally. ‘It’s the demand of all Jordanians,’ he added. Protestors chanted: ‘The people want to reform the regime’, ‘we want a fair electoral law’, and ‘people want an elected government’”

(Sherwood & Finn, 2011)

March 25 – “In Amman, one person was killed and more than 100 wounded when pro-government loyalists attacked a weekly pro-reform vigil in the heart of the Jordanian capital. The clashes were broken up by riot police. The violence was the first of its kind in Jordan in more than two months of protests which have seen the king sack his cabinet and pledge reforms.”–extra-governmental violence (Marsh, Finn, & Chulov, 2011)

April 7 – “A Jordanian man set himself on fire outside the prime minister's office in Amman in the first such act since political unrest hit the country in January.” (“Jordanian self-immolates,” 2011)

June 13 – “Jordanian and western media quoted eyewitness accounts of vehicles in the royal convoy being hit twice by stones and bottles during a visit to the southern town of Tafila,
scene of demonstrations demanding the resignation of the government because of its failure to introduce reforms and fight corruption.” (Black, 2011a)

July 8 – **17 protesters injured after clash with police** (Khatib & Lust, 2014)

July 29 – **3000 demonstrate in Amman, the majority of whom members of the Muslim Brotherhood** (Khatib & Lust, 2014)

October 17 – “Marouf al-Bakhit [prime minister] was asked to resign amid charges of incompetence, economic problems, a cover-up and suspicions that the regime had orchestrated attacks on pro-democracy demonstrators.” (Black, 2011b)

References:


**Morocco**

Feb 20 - *Interior ministry figures showed that the protests were far more extensive than first thought, with nearly 40,000 people turning out in 57 towns and cities.* “Sporadic outbursts of violence have continued in Morocco after Sunday's peaceful pro-democracy protests gave way to rioting, with five people killed in a fire at a bank in the northern port of Al Hoceima.” “Interior minister Taeib Cherqaoui said 128 people had been injured on Sunday, mostly police officers. A further 120 people were detained. He said "troublemakers" had vandalised dozens of public buildings, shops and banks.” “Tangier, Larache, Marrakech, Sefrou, Tetouan and Guelmim suffered the worst violence, with a total of 33 public buildings being attacked or set on fire;” movement started on Facebook (Tremlett, 2011)

Feb 21 – **King Mohammad VI creates Social and Economic Council** (Khatib & Lust, 2014)

March 9 – **King announces major change in constitution to come to promote democracy** (Khatib & Lust, 2014)
March 20 – “Thousands took to the streets in cities across Morocco on Sunday demanding better civil rights and an end to corruption in the moderate North African country where the king this month promised constitutional reform” (“Thousands in Morocco march,” 2014)

April 14 – King pardons or lessens sentence of 190 prisoners (Khatib & Lust, 2014)

April 24 – Tens of thousands protest demanding more regime changes (Khatib & Lust, 2014)

May 1 – Protests continue, now denouncing latest terror attack (April 28th) and crying for democratic change (Khatib & Lust, 2014)

May 15 – several injured after police disperse people from pro-democracy protest in Rabat (Khatib & Lust, 2014)

May 22 – “Moroccan police beat protesters who defied a ban on demonstrations across the country on Sunday, leading to arrests and dozens of injuries, some of them life threatening, witnesses said.” (Tanner & Karam, 2014)

May 29 – Police injure 29 during pro-reform protests (Khatib & Lust, 2014)

June 5 – Thousands gather in Rabat to protest death of one of their leaders from the May 29th skirmish with police (Khatib & Lust, 2014)

July 1 – Constitutional referendum that is meant to hand greater power to the Prime Minister, legislature, and judiciary passes with a reported 98% of the vote, yet leaves the King with significant executive power (Khatib & Lust, 2014 and Arieff, 2011)

July 4 – “The official figures showing that 98% of voters backed Morocco’s reform referendum are "unbelievable", a democracy campaigner has told the BBC.” Protests ensue with protestors carrying empty boxes symbolizing a belief in low turnout despite the government reporting a 79% turnout (“Morocco vote,” 2011)

Sept 18 – 3,000 in Casablanca and 2,000 in Tangiers hit the streets to motivate further protest (Khatib & Lust, 2014)

Nov 25 – 45% turnout to vote in first parliamentary elections, with the PJD gaining the majority and their Abdelilah Benkirane being elected as Prime Minister (Khatib & Lust, 2014)

References:


Yemen Timeline

Jan 23 – “Inspired by the Tunisian revolt, thousands joined noisy protests in Sana'a last week, in the first large-scale public challenge to Saleh in his 32-year rule. Yemeni authorities responded with the arrest today of the activist Tawakul Karman, a key orchestrator of the demonstrations” (Finn, 2011a)

Jan 27 – “Thousands of people took to the streets of Sana'a today, calling for an end to the reign of President Ali Abdullah Saleh in some of the biggest anti-government rallies Yemen has seen for a decade.” “In a bid to defuse tensions Saleh has raised army and civil servant salaries, and denied claims he plans to install his son, Ahmed, as his successor. Saleh has also ordered income taxes to be halved, and has told ministers to control prices” (Finn, 2011b)

Jan 29 – “Yemen's ruling party calls for dialogue with the opposition in a bid to stem anti-government protests.” “Saleh supporters attack and disperse Yemenis who try to march to the Egyptian embassy in Sanaa to express solidarity with Egyptian anti-government demonstrators.” (“Yemen: timeline of protests,” 2011)

Feb 3 – “A day of anti-government protests brings more than 20,000 people onto the streets in Sanaa.” (“Yemen: timeline of protest,” 2011)

Feb 14 – “In the Yemeni capital Sanaa, protesters marched for a fourth consecutive day, demanding the removal of President Ali Abdullah Saleh. Saleh, who has ruled the Arab world's poorest country since 1978, pledged recently not to run again for the presidency in 2013, but opposition forces are demanding that he emulate Egypt's Hosni Mubarak and step down at once. They faced attacks by government supporters wielding broken bottles, daggers and rocks. Police were unable to control the crowds in Taiz, where thousands of Yemeni protesters had held an all-night rally.” (Black, 2011)

Feb 18 – On the “Friday of Rage,” 5 protesters killed on their 8th straight day of protest (Khatib & Lust, 2014)

Feb 23 – “Medics at the university said 21 people, many of them teenagers, were wounded when a mob of supporters of President Ali Abdullah Saleh broke through a police line and fired at protesters with AK47 assault rifles as well as pistols. Witnesses said the balaataja (pro-government thugs) fired weapons into the air before turning on the protesters and shooting at random into the crowd; Protesters claim that these gangs are being paid by the government to attack them, but Yemeni authorities deny this;” 2 left dead (Finn, 2011c)

Feb 25 – “Local media reported 30,000 anti-government demonstrators in Sana'a and more than 100,000 nationwide. Students, tribesmen, opposition activists and young professionals flooded the streets around Sana'a University, where protesters have been camped out since Sunday. "The people want the regime to fall," they shouted, rising from their knees after a Friday prayer to mourn the deaths of two men shot dead on Tuesday by pro-Saleh supporters. The protest was peaceful, though at times tense. Protesters want better living conditions as well as political reform.” (Internationally coordinated day of rage)
(Sherwood & Finn, 2011); In Sana’a at least 43 wounded and between 4 and 11 dead (Khatib & Lust, 2014)

March 2 – “Saleh says he will draw up a new constitution to create a parliamentary system. The opposition rejects the proposal” (“Yemen: timeline of protest,” 2011)

March 8 – “There's more on Yemen from the Associated Press, which reports that about 2,000 inmates have staged a revolt at a prison in the capital, taken a dozen guards hostage and joined calls by anti-government protesters for Saleh to step down;” 80 wounded (Siddique, 2011)

March 9 – “The Yemeni government escalated its efforts to stop mass protests yesterday calling for the president's removal, with soldiers firing rubber bullets and tear gas at students camped at a university in the capital during a raid that left at least 98 people wounded, officials said.” (“Yemen army wounds 98,” 2011)

March 12 – “Yemeni security forces have killed four people and wounded hundreds more in the second day of a harsh crackdown on anti-government protests, witnesses said. One of the dead was a 15-year-old student.” (Evans, 2011)

March 18 – “Snipers kill 52 protesters at Sanaa University after Friday prayers. Saleh declares a state of emergency.” (“Yemen: timeline of protest,” 2011)


March 21 – “Senior army commanders, including Saleh ally General Ali Mohsen, commander of the northwest military zone, say they have switched support to pro-democracy activists.” (“Yemen: timeline of protest,” 2011)

March 23 – “Saleh offers to step down by the end of 2011. He also proposes to hold a referendum on a new constitution, then a parliamentary election and presidential vote.” (“Yemen: timeline of protest,” 2011)

March 25 – “Saleh says he is ready to cede power to stop more bloodshed. Thousands rally in 'Day of Departure’ protests.” (“Yemen: timeline of protest,” 2011)

March 28 – “At least 121 people have died after a series of explosions at a munitions factory in southern Yemen, as President Ali Abdullah Saleh was losing his grip on parts of the country amid an anti-regime revolt.” (Finn, 2011c)

April 18 – “Ruling party members, including three former ministers, form Justice and Development Bloc to support protests.” (“Yemen: timeline of protest,” 2011)

April 23 – “Saleh agrees to step down in weeks in return for immunity from prosecution. The opposition agrees to the plan.” (“Yemen: timeline of protest,” 2011)


May 22 – “Loyalist gunmen trap Western and Arab diplomats in the UAE embassy in Sanaa, blocking mediators from going to the presidential palace. Diplomats later leave by helicopter.” (“Yemen: timeline of protest,” 2011)

May 24 – “Saleh's refusal to sign the power transfer deal sparks street battles in Sanaa between his security forces and a powerful tribal group, the Hashed tribal alliance, led by Sadeq al-Ahmar. At least 20 people are killed.” (“Yemen: timeline of protest,” 2011)


June 3 – “Opposition parades through Sanaa the bodies of 50 people it says were killed in clashes with Saleh's forces; Street battles have killed at least 155 over last 10 days,
more than 370 people have been killed in total; A bomb explodes at Saleh's palace in Sanaa, wounding the president, the prime minister, and the parliament speaker; Saleh leaves for treatment in Riyadh hospital.” (“Yemen: timeline of protest,” 2011)

July 7 – “Saleh makes first televised appearance since attack, says he supports dialogue and welcomes power sharing;” opposition rejects offer (“Yemen: timeline of protest,” 2011)


Sept 7 - “Ruling party approves changes to power transfer plan, which would transfer Saleh's powers to his vice president but give him three months to formally step down. It provides the basis for an interim government, which is to draft a new constitution and restructure the Saleh-controlled military;” Saleh wants further talks (“Yemen: timeline of protest,” 2011)

Sept 18 – “Protests escalate as security forces fire on demonstrators, killing 21 and wounding dozens.” (“Yemen: timeline of protest,” 2011)


Sept 20 – “At least nine people were killed today in Yemen as government troops shelled a protest camp in the capital of Sana’a. Witnesses say at least three missiles struck the camp just after morning prayers at around 5 a.m. Government snipers have also been shooting protesters from the rooftops. At least 60 people have died in Yemen since Sunday, making it the deadliest period since the anti-government protests began eight months ago. Medical personnel in Sana’a have been overwhelmed trying to care for protesters injured in the government attacks” (“Yemen: 9 killed,” 2011); “What began as a government crackdown on a march on Sunday is shifting into a fierce military showdown between the Republican Guard – an elite force headed by Saleh's son Ahmed – and defected soldiers loyal to Ali Mohsen, a powerful general who joined the opposition in March.” (Finn, 2011d)

Sept 21 – “Yemen ceasefire but 10 more are killed,” (Finn, 2011d)

Sept 24 – “At least 40 people have been killed in Yemen amid fierce fighting between troops loyal to president Ali Abdullah Saleh and his military and civilian opponents in the capital, Sana’a.” (Batty, 2011)

Sept 25 – “Ali Abdullah Saleh offers early elections for a transfer of power as 18 unarmed protesters are shot and injured by government troops” (Finn, 2011e)

Oct 15 – “Twelve people were shot dead and dozens wounded on Saturday when security forces and plain-clothed government loyalists launched a coordinated attack opening fire on a mass rally in the Yemeni capital of Sana'a, calling for President Ali Abdullah Saleh's resignation.” (Finn, 2011f)

Oct 16 – “Six people were shot dead in Yemen on Sunday, including a 20-year-old woman, when plain-clothes government loyalists launched a sniper attack on a rally in Sana'a calling for President Ali Abdullah Saleh's resignation.” (Finn, 2011g)

Oct 17 – “Yemen's capital has been rocked by a night of explosions and gunfire as troops loyal to the president, Ali Abdullah Saleh, battled with rebel tribesmen and defected soldiers for control of the city.” (Finn, 2011h)

Oct 18 – “For the fourth day in a row unarmed protesters have been shot dead in Yemen's capital Sana'a after government loyalists opened fire on another mass...
demonstration calling for president Ali Abdullah Saleh's resignation.” (Finn, 2011i)

Oct 26 – “Hundreds of Yemeni women set fire to veils on Wednesday in protest at the government's crackdown on demonstrators, after overnight clashes in the capital and another city left 25 people dead, officials said.” (“Yemeni women set veils ablaze,” 2011)

Nov 23 – “After nine months of mass protests calling for his resignation, Ali Abdullah Saleh has signed an agreement in Saudi Arabia transferring his powers to the vice president in return for immunity from prosecution.” (Finn, 2011j)

References:


Kuwait Timeline

January – “In January, the emir issued 1,000 dinar (£2,260) grants and free food coupons for every Kuwaiti. Those handouts have been since dwarfed by other Gulf rulers trying to use their riches to dampen calls for political reform.” (Kuwait Security Crackdown, 2011)
Feb 6 – *Sheikh Ahmed al-Hamoud takes over as new minister of the interior upon successor’s torture allegations.* (Khatib & Lust, 2014)
Feb 19 – *Security forces clash w/ stateless people (Kuwaiti bidun) demanding citizenship, free edu., and other benefits:** thirty left wounded (Khatib & Lust, 2014)
March 8 – In anticipation of protests, police block off the main square in Kuwait City (Khatib & Lust, 2014)
March 31 – Kuwait’s cabinet resigns in thick of MENA protests (some believe they did this to avoid questions about not sending troops to Bahrain) (Khatib & Lust, 2014)
June 3 – 500 gather demanding resignation of Al-Sabah (Khatib & Lust, 2014)
Sept 11 – *September 16 Youth demands major reforms and for the emirate to appoint a PM outside of Al-Sabah ruling family* (Khatib & Lust, 2014)
Sept 21 – 5,000 gather in protest in Kuwait city calling for political change and an end to corruption (Khatib & Lust, 2014)
Oct 10 – around 3,000 customs workers go on strike calling for better working conditions (Khatib & Lust, 2014)
Oct 20 – over 10,000 protest in Kuwait City urging the PM to step down (Khatib & Lust, 2014)
Nov 16 – *Protestors and opposition MP’s directly confront the National Assembly calling for the PM to step down and then demonstrate in Irada Square, where they clash w/ riot police* (Khatib & Lust, 2014) “Dozens of protesters surged past police barricades on Wednesday and briefly entered the parliament chamber amid attempts by opposition MPs to bring the prime minister in for questioning over claims that officials transferred state funds to accounts abroad;” “The interior ministry said five members of the security services were
injured during Wednesday's scuffles in parliament. There was no word on whether protesters were injured or detained: “Kuwait's ruler has ordered the authorities to tighten security measures and make arrests if necessary after protesters stormed parliament in anger at claims of high-level corruption.” (“Kuwait Security Crackdown,” 2011)

Nov 28 – **Upon resignation of three ministers, the PM holds emergency meeting** (Khatib & Lust, 2014)

References:


### Oman Timeline

**Jan 17** – “*In this protest, some 200 people focused their attention on the rising prices of basic goods and on corruption, ending up outside the housing ministry to demand higher wages and lower prices.*” (Worrall, 2012)

**Feb 8** – **Green Marches** (Worrall, 2012)

**Feb 18** – “*the second Green March, organized online, took place in the middle of Muscat, again protesting outside key ministries but attracting fewer than 400 demonstrators.*” (Worrall, 2012)

**Feb 23** – “*This second Green March culminated on February 23 with a petition delivered to the Diwan of the Royal Court for the sultan's attention.*9 The second Green March and the handover of the petition were characterized by demonstrations of loyalty to the sultan, with banners expressing support for him prominently displayed among those marching. In conversations about this phenomenon in August 2011, Omanis, including both old friends and recent acquaintances, expressed universal acclaim for the sultan's handling of the protests and took care to stress that those who had turned violent had gone too far. A common theme in these conversations was that corrupt merchants and senior ministers had clearly pulled the wool over the sultan's eyes and were taking advantage of him for their own personal aims.” (Worrall, 2012)

**Feb 25-26** – “*On February 25, they reached Dhofar in the south, with a group of young protesters staging a sit-in in front of the governor's office and issuing an appeal to Qaboos entitled the "call to good." The following day, larger protests erupted in the northern port city of Sohar, site of Oman's highest concentration of industry. They were to become more serious than those up to this point. By the evening of Saturday, February 26, violence had marred a demonstration calling for employment in the city, and there had been threatening scenes as a crowd approaching 500 strong blockaded vehicles and shoppers at the town's Lu Lu hypermarket.10 A protest camp was also set up at the Kurra Ardiyah, or Globe Roundabout.” (Worrall, 2012)

**Feb 27** – The following day, things quickly escalated out of control with the blocking of trucks trying to enter the port and the looting and arson of the Lu Lu supermarket and neighbouring shops. It seemed that the protesters were settling in for the long haul, based...
The protesters on February 27 also targeted the governor's office and a police station, setting fire to them and to a number of cars. This escalation in the levels of violence and criminality and the increasing focus of the violence on the security forces brought about a more robust response. Police fired rubber bullets and tear gas at demonstrators gathered at the Globe Roundabout, which protesters had named "Reform Square," leading to the death of at least one person. There were also reports of the army's firing live rounds into the air in an attempt to disperse the protesters. (Worrall, 2012)

"Reporting Sunday's disturbances in Sohar, the state-controlled Oman News Agency said a number of demonstrators were involved in "riots" that resulted in public and private property being destroyed." "An official who did not want to be named told AFP news agency: "Two were killed after being shot with rubber bullets as protesters attempted to storm a police station." "On Saturday the ruler, Sultan Qaboos bin Said, changed six ministers in his cabinet in what he termed "the public's interest" and announced that social benefits for students would be boosted." ("Oman clashes," 2011)

March 1 – “the army moved into Sohar in small numbers to clear the blockade of the port and Globe Roundabout; there were attempts to keep journalists at bay. With the port itself re-opened, there remained a continuing blockade of the main industrial area's access to it, but the roundabout was cleared of protestors. The following day, with sit-ins continuing all around the sultanate, and the American and British embassies advising against all travel to Sohar — combined with a warning about a third Green March planned for March 4 — a strange kind of calm descended. It appeared that things had got out of hand in Sohar, while protests elsewhere remained calm and were only lightly policed.” (Worrall, 2012)

March 2 – “By this stage, those in favor of the government began to stage demonstrations of loyalty, starting with a gathering of 2,000 men at a mosque in Muscat to show their support for the sultan. It was perhaps notable that those protesting in favor of the sultan the following day (March 2) took to their cars to do so. The BBC even carried a picture of a Lamborghini with a huge likeness of the sultan across the bonnet. This largely summed up the differences in wealth between the two groupings. Meanwhile, the demonstrations around the country appeared to be growing in size, with even official sources suggesting that 10,000 were now protesting in Salalah and 5,000 in Sur. With the clearing of the Globe Roundabout and the poor response to a day of action called via Facebook for March 2, and with only 50 people turning out in Sohar, where earlier crowds had peaked at around 2,000, the Omani Spring entered a new and quieter phase.” (Worrall, 2012)

March 17 – “strikes also occurred with the forced closure by strikers of all 150 units in the Rusayl industrial estate north of Muscat” (Worrall, 2012)

March 20 – “strikes at the refineries in Muscat and Sohar” (Worrall, 2012)

March 21 – “demonstration by a reported 7,000 people who handed over a proclamation to the public prosecutor on March 21 demanding the immediate investigation of the finances of all ministers, advisers and officials” (Worrall, 2012)

March 28 – “the army moved into the Globe Roundabout once more and cleared the 20 protestors who were still manning the sit-in. The following day, reports emerged that the Public Prosecutor's Office had ordered the arrest of suspects in Sohar. By this stage, it was becoming clearer just how bad things had become in the city, with reports of
government branch offices having been besieged” (Worrall, 2012)

April 1 – “The crackdown on the residual protests in Sohar had a catalytic effect, though, galvanizing further protests after Friday prayers on April 1 with demands for the release of those arrested a few days before. What was branded as a peaceful protest very quickly got out of hand. Protestors stoned the police, who responded with force, shooting one protester dead and injuring at least six more. The army once again had to be deployed to restore order in the town; it remained in force there for more than a week with a particularly heavy presence for Friday prayers” (Worrall, 2012)

April 22-30 – “While from then on there was a de-escalation of tension in Sohar, following such a clear demonstration of force, protests continued elsewhere. In Salalah, more than 3,000 protested against corruption on April 22 and again on April 30. The sit-in in Salalah had by this point been going on for two months, with numbers peaking at times as high as 10,000.” (Worrall, 2012)

May 14 – “Having seen the final success of the show of force in Sohar, the government ordered the army to disperse the sit-in in Salalah on May 14; this led to some violent clashes. The army used overwhelming force, including helicopters and armored personnel carriers sparking running battles with protesters on the streets of Salalah. This was accompanied by a brief blackout of the Internet and mobile-phone services throughout the south of the country. Many were arrested but released the next day, although there were reports of the leaders being taken to Muscat for questioning. On the same day, the long-running sit-in outside the Majlis building in Seeb was also broken up, this time peacefully. With the release of almost all of those detained by May 22, demonstrators formally called off their sit-ins in Salalah.” (Worrall, 2012) “Security forces used their batons and took away protesters in three army buses” (Sandels, 2011)

Oct 11 – “Twelve people were arrested in Rustaq on Monday after security forces used tear gas and batons to disperse a group of teachers who had gathered outside the office of the directorate general of education, demanding certain amendments in the system.” (“12 arrested as teachers protest,” 2011)

“By the end of May, the protests seemed to have run out of steam, and more and more activists called an official halt to the protests for Ramadan, due to begin around August 1. It seemed as if the Oman Spring was over. While the atmosphere remained somewhat strained even in August, people were happy to talk about what had happened but remained concerned about a revival of the protests after Eid. In late July, there were small protest gatherings in Salalah and Sohar, which ended peacefully.48 After the end of Ramadan, there were some protests but they were minor and sporadic.” (Worrall, 2012)

References:


UAE Timeline/Notes
March 8 – “the UAE government expanded the size of the electorate for "selecting" candidates for the FNC from 6,000 to 129,000. This may seem a rather small number despite the 21.5-fold increase; the total national population is just below one million, almost half under 18. Just under 30 percent of the adult national population were eligible to vote — admittedly, the selection process seemed quite strange — and the powers of the FNC are certainly quite limited. The announcement probably spurred activists to submit and publicize a petition soon afterward. Ibtissam Ketbi, the first of the 133 signatories on the list, told The Wall Street Journal that the petition simply asked that the FNC be reformed and "given more authority. It should have legislative powers as well as powers of accountability." She added that "elections should be a right of every citizen." It was also reported that a number of former FNC members signed the petition” (Forstenlechner, Rutledge, & Rashed, 2012)

“Of the 133 signatories, one individual was arrested shortly after the petition was published, charged with "publicly insulting the federation's rulers," though it is important to note that this was not based on the petition, but on his writings elsewhere. He and several other activists became known internationally as the "UAE-5." They had been conducting a more direct, online campaign via uaehewar.net, a now defunct website forum on which a large number of individuals openly discussed contemporary affairs in the UAE. Currently they are in the process of appealing their convictions based on these posts (all received a presidential pardon immediately). One of the five, Nasser bin Ghaith, wrote in a blog post prior to his arrest, "They have announced 'benefits and handouts', assuming their citizens are not like other Arabs or other human beings, who see freedom as a need no less significant than other physical needs." This is rather more direct, going beyond the courteous and meticulously worded petition.” (Forstenlechner, Rutledge, & Rashed, 2012)

Nov 20 – “The federation's president, Sheik Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan, announced Wednesday that public sector workers will get raises of 35 percent or more starting in January. Some employees will see their base salaries doubled;” “The UAE has not experienced the widespread popular uprisings of the Arab Spring, and the huge raises appeared to be at least in part an attempt by the government to keep it that way;” “The president also ordered the establishment of a $2.7 billion fund designed to provide loan assistance for lower-income citizens, and broadened the definition of who is eligible for citizenship.” (“Emirates boost salaries,” 2011)

Dec 11 - “The individuals who make up the UAE-7 (some of the detainees currently being held) had their citizenship revoked in early December 2011; just days after the UAE-5 were released. The seven are all self-declared Islamists and acknowledge active membership in
Al Islah. They gained their appellation in part from the international media coverage surrounding the confiscation of their passports by the authorities—a decision that at face value seems draconian. This incident, coupled with the decision of one of the UAE-5 to go into exile, precedes the subsequent detention of more MB members and the involvement of the Egyptian Brotherhood in part via the UK-based and MB-funded satellite channel "Al Hiwar." Suffice it to say that, with respect to the detainees, there are "allegations" and "counter-allegations."

"The seven individuals are currently appealing the decision in the UAE courts; however, the attorney general has been reported as saying that the Ministry of Interior had the right to do so on "grounds of national security." – curbing the physical diffusion of contagion (Forstenlechner, Rutledge, & Rashed, 2012)

Why not UAE?
Young People’s Support

- “In a 2012 Pen Schoen Berland survey of young adults 18–24 in the Middle East, a striking observation was that, despite the regime changes in Egypt and Tunisia, and Lebanon and Kuwait's incumbent parliamentary systems, the country that the vast majority of those surveyed wanted their own country to emulate was the UAE (ahead of both France and the United States). Moreover, they considered the UAE to be the country where they would most like to live (40 percent). Young adults feel most strongly that they would like their country to be like the UAE (50 percent), and 48 percent of young Libyans agree. When asked which country was a model of growth and development, the sample as a whole again put the UAE first (27 percent). Interestingly, if young Emirati adults had to choose a country that the UAE should emulate, 30 percent said France, 30 percent said the United States and only 8 percent said neighboring Saudi Arabia. Emirati young adults were the second-least likely (after those in Egypt) to think that the Arab Spring would continue this year. The positive sentiment towards living and working in the UAE was also observed among expatriates in the Middle East in a YouGov (2010) survey: the top two "desirable cities to live and work in" were Abu Dhabi and Dubai. The same survey in 2012 found similar, if not better, sentiment toward the UAE. Abu Dhabi and Dubai were again ranked first and second, respectively, while Sharjah had moved from third to sixth place” (Forstenlechner, Rutledge, & Rashed, 2012).

Wealth

- “Many of the UAE’s citizens rely on government jobs, which include generous pay packages and other benefits” (Emirates boost salaries,” 2011)
- “The U.A.E.'s wealth shields it from the sort of economic pressures that have sparked unrest in Egypt and Tunisia. The country's per capita income is among the highest in the world, and fat government coffers make sure the needs of locals are met, including free housing, health care and education and heavily subsidized energy.” (Shah & Dhabi, 2011)
- “To rely on the social contract during the time it will take to see such a transition through may not be tenable for the Arab Gulf countries whose oil reserves are fast dwindling. For the UAE, however, even at the current extraction rate of 2.9 million barrels per day, its current reserve-to-production ratio is estimated at 80 years.” (Forstenlechner, Rutledge, & Rashed, 2012)
• “The government then shifted its focus to top-down reforms and distributing largesse to the national population. In addition to an expansion of the electorate for the September 2011 Federal National Council elections, massive salary increases were also announced for public sector employees, in some cases of up to 100 percent, while welfare benefits were increased by up to 20 percent and a $2.7 billion package to assist poorer nationals with outstanding loans was set up.” (Davidson, 2012)

Mild repression/censorship

• “In the UAE, in early April authorities arrested five activists, known as the ‘UAE 5,’ after they allegedly posted statements on the internet forum UAE Hewar, which authorities have banned. None of the messages on UAEHewar that have been attributed to the UAE 5 went beyond peaceful criticism of government policy or political leaders, said Human Rights Watch and other rights groups that reviewed the posts.” “The state charged the five men in early June under articles 176 and 8 of the UAE penal code, which punish public ‘insults’ of the country’s top officials. During their trial, the Federal Supreme Court patently violated the activists’ fair trial rights and refused to grant them pretrial release. After their conviction on November 27 the UAE’s president commuted their prison sentences. While the men were freed, their passports have yet to be returned.” (“UAE: Free speech under attack,” 2012)

• “UAE authorities further clamped down on freedom of expression by disbanding the elected boards of the Jurists Association and the Teachers’ Association after they and two other nongovernmental organizations co-signed a public appeal in April calling for greater democracy in the country. The decrees replaced elected board members with state appointees and said that the associations had violated the 2008 Law on Associations, which prohibits organizations and their members from interfering “in politics or in matters that impair state security and its ruling regime.” (“Joint letter to UAE,” 2011)

• “Beneath that stability, however, were small fractures that led to the government's cracking down on efforts it perceived to be a threat. Authorities blocked a website, UAE Hewar, where many of the bloggers had posted calls for a constitutional monarchy and more direct democracy, culminating in a petition signed by 133 Emiratis in March. By the next month, the U.A.E. government also dissolved the elected boards of the Jurists' Association and the Teachers' Association, among the most prominent nongovernmental groups in the country, after members signed the petition calling for reforms. Police then arrested the five dissidents currently being tried: Ahmed Mansour, an engineer who is also a member of Human Rights Watch's Middle East advisory board; Nasser bin Ghaith, a lecturer at the Abu Dhabi branch of the Sorbonne University; and the activists Fahad Salim Dalk, Ahmed Abdul Khaleq and Hassan Ali Al Khamis.” (Shah & Dhabi, 2011)

• “A poll commissioned last month by the Doha Debates, a Qatar-based public forum, reported that many Persian Gulf Arabs are afraid to speak out against their rulers in any capacity. That contrasted with the perspective of Arab respondents living outside the Gulf in the rest of the Middle East and North Africa, who said they felt they now had a more open political environment.” (Shah & Dhabi, 2011)

• “Al-Islah, an Islamist group, issued a statement in December saying the authorities had confiscated the citizenship documents of seven of its members, some of whom had signed a petition in March seeking political reforms. UAE authorities later acknowledged that a presidential order had stripped six of the men of their citizenship for “acts posing a threat
to the state's security and safety.” The authorities have not publicly commented on the seventh case.” (“UAE: Free speech under attack,” 2012)

- “When protests began in Bahrain last year, for example, Saudi Arabia sent troops to crush the unrest. Dozens of activists were killed. “Saudi or Emirati citizens wanting to get a sense of what would happen if they mobilized need look no further than Bahrain,” said Toby Jones, a Rutgers University professor who studies Arab reform movements. “They saw what happened and how little the West did to stop it.” (Dreazen, 2012)

- “While citizens of the UAE can by no means express themselves in public forums as freely as those of the UK or the United States, this is not new, nor is it becoming discernibly more pronounced. The UAE is also something of a hub for international media; CNN and Sky News both broadcast their MENA-based Arabic satellite channels from there. British broadsheets such as The Guardian are available unabridged, as is The Economist, both of which often carry detailed and revealing critiques of the UAE. The Times and The Financial Times are also printed there daily. Domestic media outlets, on the other hand, do operate within certain parameters and exert an often unhealthy level of self-censorship. And, as in many monarchies around the world, they never directly criticise members of the ruling families.” (Forstenlechner, Rutledge, & Rashed, 2012)


- “Although the turmoil of the Arab Spring popular revolts has largely passed it by, the UAE introduced Internet restrictions in 2012 to hinder the use of social media to organise protests, and imprisoned a large group of Islamists on charges to plotting a coup in 2013” (“United Arab Emirates profile,” 2015)

References:


Qatar Notes

Focused on being mediator/policymaker abroad:

- “Throughout the tumultuous period of 2011 and 2012, Qatari policy makers have taken an aggressive new stance against violent oppression of protestors in Libya and Syria. Features of this assertive new position have included a robust new leadership role within the Arab League, characterized by extensive mediation efforts and a strong hand in plans to end the violent crackdowns across the region. Most controversial, however, has been the small Gulf country’s breaking with its traditional role as impartial third party, making an unprecedented move to ‘take sides’ during successive crises in Libya and Syria. In Libya, Qatari activity included a variety of contributions to the campaign which eventually ousted Colonel Gaddafi, most significantly lobbying for military intervention, and the provision of weapons, Mirage jets and ground troops to rebel and ally forces. Similarly, in Syria, when regional and international diplomatic efforts failed to halt brutal oppression of protestors by the Assad regime, Qatar stepped up efforts to end the crisis, openly calling for the president to step down, and advocating for the international community to help the armed opposition ‘by all means’, including through the provision of cash and weapons” (Barakat, 2012)

- “the past decade had seen Qatar carefully develop this niche position, utilizing its wealth, will and vision, together with three key strategies – economic and political liberalization, state branding and an independent foreign policy – to pursue an ambitious role in peacemaking. As a result, at the opening of the Arab Spring period, Qatar boasted a unique combination of characteristics rare in the Middle East region, including regionally and internationally recognized legitimacy and a reputation for impartiality; stability at home; a relatively progressive stance towards governance; the ability to make swift policy decisions; and extensive experience in mediation. All of the above paved the way for the country to assume an extraordinarily high-profile role in peacemaking during the Arab Spring, particularly in Libya and Syria” (Barakat, 2012)

- “Also key to their efforts have been a number of soft-power initiatives to influence events, including support for Al Jazeera, which has played a remarkable role in the Arab Spring uprisings as a whole, and whose ‘relentless coverage speeded [Gaddafi’s] messy slide to extinction’, according to The Economist (2011). Qatar also built on its experience with Al Jazeera in establishing another news channel, Libya TV, to counteract the Gaddafi propaganda machine and garner the support of the wider Libyan population. Also key to the all-inclusive strategy in Libya was the provision of hundreds of thousands of dollars of humanitarian relief in the form of food and medical supplies within Libya, the construction of refugee camps in Tunisia, and significant investment in post-war reconstruction efforts following the fall of Gaddafi, with Doha hosting an international donor conference aimed at raising US$2.5 billion for immediate post-conflict needs” (Barakat, 2012)
Problems with their self-assumed role?

• “A further criticism leveled at Qatar has been its apparent ‘picking and choosing’ of which rebellions to support. The state has actively worked to oust Gaddafi and Assad, whilst simultaneously providing support to the Bahrain authorities to quash a similar domestic uprising through the regional Gulf Cooperation Council. The Qatari government additionally allegedly forced Al Jazeera to tailor coverage of the Arab Spring uprisings according to the Qatari ‘version’ of events. This allegedly included downplaying coverage of unrest in Bahrain compared to other countries, and failing to report on early arming of rebel groups in Syria. Such biased coverage of the Arab uprisings resulted in the resignation of at least one reporter in protest” (Barakat, 2012)

• Al Jazeera, the international news agency broadcasting in both Arabic and English, is headquartered in Doha, the capital, and funded by the Qatari government. While the station covers regional and international news, and played an important role in reporting the pro-democracy Arab Spring movements, few stories report on Qatar.” (hrw)

• “The problem isn't who is telling lies and who is accurate. Media organisations are giving the part of the story that serves the agenda of their financier, so it's clear that only part of the truth is exposed while the other part is buried. What is obvious is that the investment in credibility during the past two decades has been in vain. The elite are once again dealing with Arab news channels the way they used to do with Arab state media (Hashem, 2012).

• “Once again, people have started relying more on western media to know what's going on. That is reflected in the number of viewers the BBC Arabic TV channel gained during the past year – reportedly more than 10m while leading Arab channels have been losing viewers.” (Hashem, 2012)

Why not in Qatar?

-Wealth/greater possible opportunity costs

• “Arab Spring revolutions. Many argue that the economic prowess, astonishingly high GDP, and international prestige projects such as the 2022 World Cup mean that the Qatari population see themselves as having too much at risk to stir up a popular uprising” (Barakat, 2012)

• “In September, nearby Qatar announced wide-ranging salary increases that include raises of 60 percent for some civil servants and up to 120 percent for military officers.” (Emirates boost salaries,” 2011)

-Mild Repression/censorship

• “On March 2, plainclothes individuals believed to be state security agents took into custody Sultan al-Khalafii, a Qatari blogger and former secretary general of Alkarama, a Geneva-based NGO monitoring human rights in the Arab world. They searched his home for two hours and confiscated possessions, including al-Khalafii’s laptop. Authorities released him a month later without charge (Human Rights Watch).

• In June Qatar’s Advisory Council approved a new media law that allows for criminal penalties against journalists who write critically on “friendly countries” or matters pertaining to national security, but arrests require a court order. The emir had not approved the law at this writing. Under the media law still in effect, journalists may be
arrested without a court order. In April police arrested two Swiss sports journalists for Radio Television Suisse (RTS) and interrogated them for several hours. The journalists had been filming a segment on soccer (football) in Qatar after the country won its bid to host the 2022 soccer World Cup. An RTS statement said a judge ordered them to pay a fine, and that authorities prevented them from leaving the country for 13 days (Human Rights Watch).

- “Qatari blogger and the founder of a human rights organization, Sultan al-Khalaifi, who was arrested on March 2nd 2011 and detained incommunicado was released on April 1st 2011 without any charges.” (“Qatar Human Rights,” 2015)
- “Following their release, Abdullah al-Khawar and Salem al-Kawari alleged that while detained without charge or trial as security suspects in 2011, they were beaten, suspended by their limbs and made to remain standing for hours at a time, deprived of sleep, held in solitary confinement in tiny cells, and subjected to cold temperatures for long periods while interrogators sought to obtain “confessions” from them. The authorities took no steps to investigate their allegations or bring the perpetrators to justice.” (“Annual Report: Qatar,” 2013)
- “The poet Mohammed al-Ajami, also known as Mohamed Ibn al-Dheeb, who was charged with ‘inciting to overthrow the ruling regime’ and ‘insulting the Amir’ was sentenced to life imprisonment by the Doha Criminal Court on 29 November. His poems criticized repression in the Gulf States. He was detained incommunicado following his arrest in November 2011 and appeared to be a prisoner of conscience. He appealed against his conviction” (“Annual Report: Qatar,” 2013).

References:


Lebanon Timeline

“It’s a great irony: In the one Arab country where citizens could legally and peacefully rid themselves of second- and third-generation leaders who rose on little but their last name, they choose not to do so. There are a lot of reasons for that, related to Lebanon’s peculiar political system and its precarious domestic peace — but one key reason is the families themselves have proven incredibly politically flexible.” (Kenner, 2013)

“Regarding the Arab Spring, one can acknowledge that uprisings in the Maghreb have not significantly impacted Lebanese politics. They have been perceived as quite far from the local scene, as their regime were seen as authoritarian. Even the Bahraini uprising was seen as far from the Lebanese scene, and only Hizbullah played the local Shia card of this uprising to loudly criticize the Bahraini power. It is only the Syrian case that has dragged the local scene in the general turmoil of the “Arab Spring.” (Meier, 2013)

Feb 27 – “Hundreds of Lebanese protested in the capital Beirut on Sunday against the country's sectarian political system;” “A Facebook page about the event showed 2,656 people due to attend the protest but only a few hundred showed up and marched along a route that was a frontline during the civil war.” ("Lebanese protest," 2011)

March 6 – “For the second week in a row, Lebanese took to the streets of Beirut on Sunday to protest against the country's sectarian political system, waving Lebanese flags and chanting Egypt- and Tunisia-inspired slogans such as "People want to topple the regime" and "Revolution;" “Activists organized the rally using Facebook and word was also spread by word of mouth and through some media outlets, protesters told Babylon & Beyond. Some demonstrators said that they had joined the march spontaneously when they spotted it in the streets.” (Sandels, 2011)

March 13 – “Tens of thousands of supporters of Lebanon's toppled premier Saad al-Hariri rallied in Beirut on Sunday, calling for the Shi'ite group Hezbollah which ousted him to put its weapons under state control;” “The demonstration in Martyrs' Square was intended as a show of strength for the billionaire Sunni politician, who has gone into opposition after the collapse in January of his fractious 14-month unity government, which included Hezbollah ministers” (Bayoumy, 2011)

March 20 – “Thousands of Lebanese turned out on Sunday in Beirut to protest the tribal and religious figureheads that embody the country's entrenched sectarian political system” (Lutz, 2011)

June 17 – “Lebanon dispatched troops Friday to quell clashes that arose in the city of Tripoli over the Syrian crisis. Prime Minister Najib Mikati said on TV that Lebanese army reinforcements went to two neighborhoods to "put an end to what happened." The clashes were between Lebanese Alawites who support the Syrian government and Sunni Muslims who oppose it. There also had been a large demonstration in Tripoli in support of the Syrian people.” “The clashes in Tripoli killed one soldier and three civilians and injured two soldiers and 10 civilians, the army said. Lebanon's National
News Agency said one of those killed was an official with the Democratic Arab Party, an Alawite entity.” (Abedine, 2011)

Oct 12 – “A Lebanese general strike planned for Wednesday was averted after an eleventh-hour deal in which the government raised wages and increased benefits, meeting the demands of the majority of workers but enraging the private sector.” (“Late-night deal,” 2011)

References:


