“Comparative Media Role during Revolutions: Iran vs. Egypt”

By

Razan Hilal

A thesis
Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the Degree of the Master of Arts in International Affairs

School of Arts & Sciences
April 2016
THESIS APPROVAL FORM

Student Name: Razan Hilal I.D. #: 200802220

Thesis Title: “Comparative Media Role during Revolutions: Iran vs. Egypt”

Program: Master of Arts in International Affairs

Department: Social Sciences

School: School of Arts & Sciences

The undersigned certify that they have examined the final electronic copy of this thesis and approved it in Partial Fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of:

Social Sciences in the major of International Affairs

Thesis Advisor’s Name: Dr. [Redacted] Signature: [Redacted] Date: 27/4/2016

Committee Member’s Name: Dr. [Redacted] Signature: [Redacted] Date: 27/4/2016

Committee Member’s Name: Dr. [Redacted] Signature: [Redacted] Date: 27/4/2016
THE THESIS COPYRIGHT RELEASE FORM

LEBANESE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY NON-EXCLUSIVE DISTRIBUTION LICENSE

By signing and submitting this license, you (the author(s) or copyright owner) grants to Lebanese American University (LAU) the non-exclusive right to reproduce, translate (as defined below), and/or distribute your submission (including the abstract) worldwide in print and electronic format and in any medium, including but not limited to audio or video. You agree that LAU may, without changing the content, translate the submission to any medium or format for the purpose of preservation. You also agree that LAU may keep more than one copy of this submission for purposes of security, backup and preservation. You represent that the submission is your original work, and that you have the right to grant the rights contained in this license. You also represent that your submission does not, to the best of your knowledge, infringe upon anyone’s copyright. If the submission contains material for which you do not hold copyright, you represent that you have obtained the unrestricted permission of the copyright owner to grant LAU the rights required by this license, and that such third-party owned material is clearly identified and acknowledged within the text or content of the submission. IF THE SUBMISSION IS BASED UPON WORK THAT HAS BEEN SPONSORED OR SUPPORTED BY AN AGENCY OR ORGANIZATION OTHER THAN LAU, YOU REPRESENT THAT YOU HAVE FULLFILLED ANY RIGHT OF REVIEW OR OTHER OBLIGATIONS REQUIRED BY SUCH CONTRACT OR AGREEMENT. LAU will clearly identify your name(s) as the author(s) or owner(s) of the submission, and will not make any alteration, other than as allowed by this license, to your submission.

Name:

Signature:

Date: 4/8/2016
PLAGIARISM POLICY COMPLIANCE STATEMENT

I certify that:

- I have read and understood LAU’s Plagiarism Policy.
- I understand that failure to comply with this Policy can lead to academic and disciplinary actions against me.
- This work is substantially my own, and to the extent that any part of this work is not my own I have indicated that by acknowledging its sources.

Name: Razan Hilal
Signature: [Redacted]
Date: 4/64/2016
Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my parents “Walid & Dana Hilal”.
ACKNOWLEDGMENT

First of all, I want to thank God for everything that I have achieved in my life. Second, I want to thank my family for standing beside me through my journey in thesis writing. Finally, I can but say how grateful I am for Dr. Salamey’s guidance, support and encouragement throughout my years at LAU and thesis writing process. I promise them and myself that this is just the first step in my success voyage.
“Comparative Media Role during Revolutions: Iran vs. Egypt”

Razan Hilal

ABSTRACT

The role of social media in contemporary Arab revolutions has been controversial. This thesis examines the role that media has played in the Egyptian uprising of 2011 in comparison to that of the Iranian Revolution of 1978. The aim is to depict the differences in media roles with the presence of social media during the Egyptian revolution – especially in facilitating the attainment of political mobilizations. The notion of enhanced solidarity through utilizing social media is put to scrutiny via a comparative examination between the two revolutions in general (the prerequisites and tools used) and scholarly work (contemporary research) in particular. The thesis reveals that despite the significant role played by social media in the Egyptian revolution, it doesn’t demonstrate significant comparative difference as a catalyzing agency.

Keywords: Egyptian Uprising, Iranian Revolution, Social Media, Conventional Media, Solidarity
Table of Contents

Chapter                                                                 Page
I.  Introduction ................................................................................................................................. 1
II. Literature Review .......................................................................................................................... 13
    2.1 Terminologies Discussion........................................................................................................... 15
    2.2 General Overview (Egyptian Uprising and Iranian Revolution) ............................................. 21
    2.3 Causes behind revolution .......................................................................................................... 24
    Table 1: Crane Brinton’s “Structural”, along with, General Reasons ........................................... 26
    Table 2: Brinton’s Conditions of Revolutions Preconditions of the “Iranian Revolution of 1978” ............................................................................................................................... 28
    Table 3: Preconditions of the “Egyptian Uprising of 2011” according to Brinton’s model .......... 30
    2.4 Message dispersion .................................................................................................................... 32
    2.5 Overview of media used ............................................................................................................ 35
    2.6 Communication theories ........................................................................................................... 37
    Figure 1: Lasswell Model .............................................................................................................. 40
    Figure 2: McLuhan’s “medium model” ......................................................................................... 41
    2.7 Recent works ............................................................................................................................. 41
III. Theory Application .......................................................................................................................... 44
    3.1 Brief application ....................................................................................................................... 44
    Table 4: Lasswell and McLuhan’s Models Application ................................................................. 44
    Table 5: Contextualism Approach and Castells Communication Power Theory Application ....... 45
    3.2 Detailed explanation: .................................................................................................................. 47
    3.2.1 McLuhan Model ................................................................................................................... 47
    Figure 3: Egyptian Uprising Progress ........................................................................................... 48
    Figure 4: Iranian Revolution Progress ......................................................................................... 49
    3.2.2.1 Contextualism Approach (“Politics Comes First Analytically”) in Egyptian Uprising: .... 50
    Figure 5: “Volume of tweets in the Arab region” ......................................................................... 53
    Contextualism Approach (“Politics Comes First Chronologically”) in Egyptian Uprising: ............ 54
Figure 6: “The growth rate of Facebook users during the 2011 protests, as compared to the same time period in 2010” ................................................................. 60

Figure 7: “Number of Tweets in the MENA region (Jan. 1 – March 30, 2011)” ................. 61

Figure 8: “Facebook user penetration in the Arab region, plus Iran, Israel and Turkey (Apr. 2011)” ...................................................................................... 62

Figure 9: “Twitter penetration in the MENA (Average between Jan. 1 and March 30, 2011)” ...................................................................................... 62

Figure 10: “The Primary Language you used to communicate on Facebook during the Civil Movement was”.................................................................. 63

Figure 11: “Social and Political Awareness (Tunisian Uprising Case)” ......................... 63

Contextualism Approach (“Politics Comes First Analytically” + “Politics Comes First Chronologically”) in Iranian Revolution: ........................................... 64

Table 6: Press Condition in the Periods: Preceding and During the Revolution ..... 66
Table 7: The Degree of Compliance with the “Press Code of 1963” ........................... 67

IV. Analysis .................................................................................................................. 69

Figure 12: “Number of active twitter users in the MENA region (Average number between Jan. 1 and March 30, 2011)” ................................................... 75

V. Conclusion and Recommendations .......................................................................... 76

VI. References ............................................................................................................ 82
List of Tables

Table 1: Crane Brinton’s “Structural and Transient”, along with, General Reasons ............... 26
Table 2: Brinton’s Conditions of Revolutions Preconditions of the “Iranian Revolution of 1978” .................................................................................................................. 28
Table 3: Preconditions of the “Egyptian Uprising of 2011” according to Brinton’s model ....... 30
Table 4: Lasswell and Mcluhan’s Models Application................................................................. 44
Table 5: Contextualism Approach and Castells Communication Power Theory Application ... 45
Table 6: Press Condition in the Periods: Preceding and During the Revolution ..................... 66
Table 7: The Degree of Compliance with the “Press Code of 1963” ....................................... 67
List of Figures

Figure 1: Lasswell Model ........................................................................................................... 40
Figure 2: McLuhan’s “medium model” .................................................................................. 41
Figure 3: Egyptian Uprising Progress .................................................................................. 48
Figure 4: Iranian Revolution Progress .................................................................................. 49
Figure 5: “Volume of tweets in the Arab region” ................................................................. 53
Figure 6: “The growth rate of Facebook users during the 2011 protests, as compared to the same time period in 2010” .............................................................................. 60
Figure 7: “Number of Tweets in the MENA region (Jan. 1 – March 30, 2011)” ................. 61
Figure 8: “Facebook user penetration in the Arab region, plus Iran, Israel and Turkey (Apr. 2011)” .................................................................................................................. 62
Figure 9: “Twitter penetration in the MENA (Average between Jan. 1 and March 30, 2011)” .............................................................................................................................. 62
Figure 10: “The Primary Language you used to communicate on Facebook during the Civil Movement was” ........................................................................................................ 63
Figure 11: “Social and Political Awareness (Tunisian Uprising Case)” ............................. 63
Figure 12: “Number of active twitter users in the MENA region (Average number between Jan. 1 and March 30, 2011)” ................................................................. 75
Chapter One

Introduction

The Arab Spring has left many wondering about the causes of these revolutions. How did they simply happen? Other questions were raised about the media’s role in the Arab Spring. These include: how does the media contribute to an uprising? Does it really play a role? Can a revolution take place without even utilizing it? Can what happened in Egypt really be called a “Facebook Revolution?” Such questions were highly debated in the aftermath of the Arab Spring. All together they form the dialogue on the role of social media in the uprisings. The debate on social media’s contribution to the Arab Spring is divided into two camps: the doubters and the advocates. Two of the skeptics are Malcolm Gladwell and Evegeny Morozov. Gladwell is a journalist with The New Yorker1. In his article “Small Change,” he maintains that genuine societal transformation is only achieved through “high-risk activism” in which revolts are powerfully connected to the extent that they are willing to provide sacrifices. An example of such activism is the Montgomery Boycott of Martin Luther King. Gladwell believes that social media provides the opposite: fragile connections and “low-risk activism.” This is because people assume that they are contributing to change through “retweeting” a story. To illustrate, Twitter enables you to follow new people (that the individual had encountered for the first time) (Adams, 2010). As for Facebook, it is a

---

method that helps in quickly gaining new friends that sometimes reach up to thousands. This is depleting, then, the possibility of having friends in the real life. The point is that the fragile bonds of such media rarely lead to “high-risk activism” (Adams, 2010).

Gladwell also assumed that activism must be controlled by a “central authority” in order to be effective. Such a centralized effort is not found in social media which, thereby, makes revolution unsuccessful. He concluded that while social networks might be beneficial for specific “communication,” they don’t lead to the needed societal transformation. This is due to the individuals’ incapability to commit to the obligations necessary for that change to take place. Gladwell further stated that: “the nature of their medium means they do so with negligible risk and therefore negligible effect.” In other words, the utilization of Facebook, for instance, is an un-risky tool, when compared to the old mechanisms such as, marching in the streets and facing the possibility of getting beaten by the police. ² Gladwell, however, was criticized, especially by Tweeters, because they felt that he was threatening their future (due to their credence that the future is for them only) (Adams, 2010). This again shifts back to the debate mentioned earlier. Further to this, Evgeny Morozov, a visiting scholar at Stanford University, assumed that the huge amount of data provided by social media leads people to lose focus regarding a certain matter. This is because they simply don’t thoroughly deal with the prevailing issues. Instead, they quickly jump to the new subject. For instance, in the aftermath of the Iranian Revolution of 2009 the tweets on Twitter were mainly on that subject, but this quickly changed after the death of Michael Jackson. At some point in

² See article by Malcolm Gladwell: Small Change, Why the revolution will not be tweeted? :
http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2010/10/04/small-change-3
the revolution, Facebook groups and the retweets have also disseminated questionable information (Rosen, 2011). As for the advocates camp, Clay Shirky, a professor at New York University, examined the ways through which social media helped in shifting the point of view away from political one. This is due to the excessive prevailing data that allows individuals to thoroughly take their decisions. This data imposes no restrictions on them, even in countries with exploitive governments. They are attained based on what a person decides to share on such social media sites (Gire, n.d.). The two camps agree on social media’s utilization by the advocates. For instance Malcolm Gladwell, the main skeptic of Twitter's influence, stated that "surely the least interesting fact about them is that some of the protesters may (or may not) have at one point or another employed some of the tools of the new media to communicate with one another.” In other words, he is stating that, undoubtedly, at one point in the uprising activists have utilized social media. The debate, therefore, revolves around this point: advocates at a certain time had relied on social media to disseminate their content and to organize protests. The second step they have taken is the range of this media’s impact. Moving away from the debate Jay Rosen of NYU explained this confusion around social media by stating: “that's no one's fault: In the midst of a revolution, it was not always easy to suss out the details of who was leading it, what social tools they were using, and what effects those tools were having. But now that the dust has started to settle, journalists


4 Press Think is a project of the Arthur L. Carter Journalism Institute at New York University see: Jay Rosen’s Press Think http://pressthink.org/about/
and academics are beginning to piece that story together.” In other words, Rosen is saying that it is hard to understand what’s happening in the revolution, especially in terms of who is in charge and what instruments were being used. Things would only become clearer in the aftermath of the uprising, after the revolution ends (Rosen, 2011). Indeed, social media’s role in the “Arab Spring” had mesmerized and perplexed scholars and researchers (Green, 2011). This explains the constant debates between both old and novel media. At first, scholars discussed the significance of the “printed media and oral transmission.” Some, however, have stood up for the crucial role of “printing” while others stressed on the significance of media as a way of social gesticulating and “public opinion” coordination. Then this debate shifted to the new social media (The Economist, 2011). The discussion around social media’s impact in the insurrections of 2011 is an ongoing process. With regard to Egypt a number of debaters believed that social media’s power rests on simultaneously enabling the activists to organize and transfer the unraveling events. This is what helped ignite the uprising. Some opponents of this notion, on the other hand, stated that at the time of the uprising social media also had a negative impact. For instance, the new media disabled the advocates from bluntly facing Mubarak’s government. Doubters collectively stated that regimes can successfully take advantage of the existing know-how’s for espionage and destabilization. They backed up this argument by giving the example of “Iran’s Green Revolution of 2009.” They also claimed that not more than 5% of Egyptians are on Facebook and Twitter. Second, they stated that those active on Twitter may not be in Egypt, but still, their tweets would be adopted by the journalists as a basis for their work. These critics, along with the researchers, acknowledge the fact that revolutions
undergo different stages and that “social media technologies” played a noticeable role in the first stage of the uprising in 2011 which endured throughout the revolution. With regard to Egypt, a number of debaters believed that “social media” power rests on simultaneously enabling the activists to organize and transfer the unraveling events. This is what helped ignite the uprising. Some opponents of this notion, on the other hand, stated that at the time of the uprising social media also had a negative impact. For instance, the new media disabled the advocates from bluntly facing Mubarak’s government (Srinivasan, 2011).

The purpose of my study is to look into the role of the media in the past (Iranian Revolution) and the present (Egyptian Uprising). This comparison mainly aims to study the two different types of media in the context of the revolutions. The thesis is not suggesting that social media was a prerequisite for a revolution, nor it is saying that this new media, by itself, caused the revolution. It does, however, examine the ways in which the new social media made the revolution in Egypt different than that of Iran. This examination provides insight on how the role of the new form of media (or social media) in the Egyptian Revolution made it different from that of Iran through creating the solidarity needed in a much easier way (paper’s hypothesis). In sum: 1) what are the media venues used in the Egyptian Uprising and the Iranian Revolution? 2) What is the general role of media in the revolutions? 3) How did media contribute to the revolutions? 4) How did the new social media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.) make the Egyptian Uprising different from the Iranian Revolution? 5) In what ways is the new Social Media facilitating the solidarity needed in the revolutions?
This paper’s focus then tackles a specific aspect of the general literature review through stressing on the significance of media in the proceedings of the revolutions. The latter is discussed through considering the two revolutions: Iran in 1978 and Egypt in 2011. However, a consideration of these two revolutions can be found in other scholarly works. For example, there is a thesis that equated between the old-style media institutes and trifling media through considering the “1978 Iranian Revolution” and the “2011 Egyptian Uprising.” The main aim of this thesis was to detect the utilization of news sources at the moment of the crisis. Another article on general importance of media was written by John Rahaghi. He stressed on media used by the revolts in the two revolutions that occurred in Iran (years 1978 and 2009). These reviews didn’t focus on the difference that the media made (whether in the Iranian or Egyptian Revolutions), but they, nonetheless, highlight the importance of the new social media with regard to assembling a revolution. The point is that this thesis helps in grasping the real role of social media in the revolutions through considering the media of the past and the present. In more modern revolutions, it is important to understand the correlation between the new social media and revolutions. The thesis further aims to investigate social media’s stance in revolutions’ success, i.e. how did the social media make the


Egyptian Uprising successful? Here lies the thesis’s significance. Before elaborating on this last point, general information on four main aspects must first be discussed. These are: globalization, media, and the two revolutions (Iranian and Egyptian). Generally speaking, media can’t be discussed before talking about globalization. After all, globalization and communication are interrelated. Many scholars assume that globalization can’t exist without media and communication. The latter is due to: 1) media companies constantly globalizing the media and its functions; 2) the role that global media plays in the way we comprehend or process world events; and 3) the worldwide communication infrastructure aids in easily transmitting global information (Fathima, 2015).

Before proceeding, it must be noted that after introducing the general debate around the subject (social media’s role in the uprising) and the purpose of the thesis, the advantages and limits of the comparative methodology must be mentioned. The comparison’s advantages are mirrored in the huge similarities (discussed throughout the thesis) between the two revolutions. The sole difference between the two is the tool that the revolts used. This helps in understanding the real role of social media in the uprising (at the basis of solidarity enhancement). In other words, how can social media have an impact in two dissimilar revolutions? The resemblances between the Iranian Revolution and Egyptian Uprising reveal that effect. The previous point reflects upon the reason behind considering the two revolutions. It is illogical to compare and contrast two completely different insurgencies. Though the comparison reveals the significance of social media in the Egyptian uprising, the points discussed here are merely possible explanations and not definite or final implications. This is what forms the comparison’s
limits. The two case studies (Iranian Revolution and Egyptian Uprising) are not enough for assuring whether social media has or doesn’t have a role in a revolution. The topic under discussion is still new and is of highly debatable. Another possible limit is that the Iranian Revolution might seem to be underestimated here. This is because of thesis’s sole focus on the tools used by the revolts. It is only natural that today’s communication networks are stronger than those of the past. That’s why more data exists on today’s media simply because of globalization and modernization. The thesis, nonetheless, doesn’t disregard the relevance of the Iranian Revolution.

The previous points are summed in the coming chapters. Starting with Chapter 2, it first provides a brief overview on globalization, media and the two revolutions (Iranian and Egyptian). For that purpose, a brief overview is also provided on the history of the various types of media. In the Egyptian Uprising, the general tool used was Social Media (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, etc.). As for the Iranian Revolution, the tools used were tapes, audiocassettes, people and interpersonal communication in the mosques and souks. Second, the chapter generally deals with both revolutions, along with the prerequisites behind an uprising and communication theories. The reasons behind the revolutions are the ones commonly deliberated by the scholars but other possible perquisites may prevail. The latter are summed in the weird semblance between the Egyptian uprising of 2011 and the Iranian revolution of 1978. Generally, however, all revolutions share common factors. They form the repetitive patterns of revolutions; these factors are the recurrent patterns in all revolutions (Almond, 2011). These are further investigated in the thesis. As for the communication theories, they aim to examine the nature of the relation between the “mass media” and the people. Media
analysts then work on understanding media’s impact and constitution (Lamb, n.d.). However, no clear theories persist on the role of new social media except the old communication theories. Instead, there are attempts manifested in different researches or studies to analyze the role of the new social media (such as the one done by University of Washington⁷). Still, communication theories could be considered to discuss the contribution of the new media to the Egyptian Uprising. A research study conducted by Social Media Lab of Ryerson University⁸ discovered that the most commonly used communication theories to address social media are the Critical, McLuhan’s Media, Game, and Social Cognitive Theories (Gruzdi, 2015). The chapter, however, covers Castell’s⁹ “Communication Power” book, along with, Lasswell¹⁰ and

---


⁸ It is a “research laboratory” at Ryerson University in Toronto, Canada. Its main focus is to study the ways in which social media is altering people communication methods, information dispersion; business formation and communities’ creation disseminate information. Second, it also considers the manners in which these changes effect the configuration of today’s society (social, economic and political bases), see: http://socialmedialab.ca/

⁹ He is a Spanish sociologist who was most known for his on the Information Age books that stressed on the shift from an “Industrial society to an Informational one”, i.e. the appearance of the “network society”. See: https://mediaecologies.wordpress.com/2010/05/31/manuel-castells-communication-power/

¹⁰ Famous for applying psychology to politics through constructing a “political system” on the basis of Natural Sciences paradigms, see: http://itc-maribor.blogspot.com/2012/01/harold-lasswell.html
Mcluhan’s communication models. Other old scholarly works are, for instance, the models of Aristotle and Shannon-Weaver. Aristotle stressed on the one delivering the message, the message, the content, and the ones receiving the message. Weaver and Shanon, on the other hand, focused on: where the messages were attained, the intention of the sender, the message itself, the medium, recipient and receiver’s way of comprehending the memo (Chand, n.d.). It must be noted that the mentioned studies do not present all the prevailing examinations on communication nor the schools of thought or the types of communication. As for the more recent work, in the aftermath of “the Arab Spring” for instance, there was a study published by sage entitled “Social Media and the Arab Spring: Politics Comes First.” This study was carried by Gadi Wolfsfeld, Elad Segev and Tamir Sheafer.

Afterwards, chapter 3 applies the previous works through considering the media used by the revolts in the Egyptian Uprising of 2011 and Iranian Revolution of 1978. This chapter mainly aims to examine media in the context of the revolutions through considering the media used, along with, the governmental restrictions on such

---

11 He was one of the leading “communication theorists” and a professor at Toronto University. See: [http://www.biography.com/people/marshall-mcluhan-9393821](http://www.biography.com/people/marshall-mcluhan-9393821)


utilization. In sum, this chapter stresses on the media’s stance in both revolutions and the rate of its utilization. This is important for grasping the real role of media in the revolutions. This helps in clearly understanding the nature of media used in each revolution.

Chapter 4 is an analysis build up on the previous chapters. As for the final chapter (5), it wraps up the entire thesis by stating the conclusion and the needed further recommendations. The latter are the opposing points of view or the critiques since there is an intense debate on whether social media can cause a real change. For instance, it is noticed that there are still austere human rights abuses in Egypt after the uprising. Accordingly, a profound change needs something more than globalization’s new social media. The thesis simply wants to use these critiques as mere proof of the significance of media, i.e. media can help in the process of policy change through shedding light on the gaps and abuses. Nowadays nothing can be hidden -- whether truth or untruth -- because anyone can fabricate a story on any social media site (Facebook, Twitter, etc.). For instance, a commoner can fabricate any story on the social media sites and still gain millions of followers. These can form pressure groups against the government thereby leading to a possible policy change of their desire. The point is that no matter what social media is an important tool that can’t be underestimated. It may cause a revolution with no significant changes, but a revolution in itself is a significant change.

In sum then the thesis covers:
1. Chapter 1: general introduction on the paper’s main focus (the debate around social media’s role in a revolution, purpose and significance of the study, along with, comparative methodology advantages and disadvantages).

2. Chapter 2: general information on: terminologies, Iranian and Egyptian revolutions, uprising prerequisites, communication theories, along with, recent works. The methodology of comparative analysis is used here to discuss the previous points.

3. Chapter 3: theories application on both revolutions through utilizing the different scholarly works and graphs.

4. Chapter 4: analysis of the previous chapters 2 and 3 through utilizing the methodology of comparative analysis.

5. Chapter 5: conclusions and recommendations based on the previous chapters (the sum up of the whole thesis).
Chapter Two

Literature Review

This chapter offers a brief review of terminologies associated with the topic under discussion. These are: globalization, social media and revolution. Second, it aims to reveal the difference between the two revolutions through stating a general overview of both. This is followed by a description of the prevailing similarities of the two revolutions. The similarities are revealed not solely in the reasons behind the revolutions, but also in other matters. These include: 1) both countries were ruled by corrupt despots who detained rules for decades, 2) both revolutions were triggered by the novel media of their time, 3) the dynasts (Mubarak and the Shah) were considered by Washington as “family friends” (as stated by Hilary Clinton), 4) both countries (Iran and Egypt) have compound societies with big inflamed cities and 5) Carter and Obama’s government were both alarmed by the revolutions (Wawro, n.d.). Furthermore, both revolutions, as Waltz stated, created a window of opportunity because they gave hope for change and a better future (Ewenstein, n.d.). Both Iran and Egypt also have strong and repressive militaries. In Egypt the dominant group is the military. It has been asked by the subsequent governments to sustain internal security and regime stability. It also delivers employment and social services to young people -- especially because of the country’s yearly double digit unemployment rates. In addition, the military has its own companies that produce consumer products, pharmaceuticals, and manufactured goods. The military was able to have a tight grip on the economy
because of the large portion of American aid directly feeding into the Egyptian military. No one knows the exact amount of those holdings, however, because authoritarian regimes sought to make the military’s economic holdings a highly clandestine affair. As a result, records vary widely. For instance, Hamzawy, a former research director for the “Carnegie Middle East Center and political science professor at Cairo University,” estimated that the military may control up to 30 percent of Egypt’s total $180 billion economy; however, there are other more conservative estimates as well. For instance, Mohamed Kadry Said\textsuperscript{14} estimated it to be more at 8 percent of GDP, or about $15 billion (Sennot, 2012)\textsuperscript{15}. As for Iran, the National Organization for Intelligence and Security, or Savak, was considered to be part of the military since it was tightly interrelated with it. It was formed in 1957 with the help of United States and “Israeli intelligence officers.” Savak then became a confidential organization. It is generally associated with the Shah’s reign. There is really no precise data on them. The existing information, however, reveals that Savak included a full-time workforce of 15,000 individuals, along with part-time stool pigeons. Its director was considered to be the “prime minister for national security affairs.” Second, it was also linked to the “Office of the Prime Minister” (Dolan, 2009). They were known for using all types of torture, especially against the protestors in the Iranian Revolution and the Shah’s political

\textsuperscript{14} a retired major general and long-time military analyst for the Al Ahram Center for Political and Strategic Studies”, see: Inside The Egyptian military’s brutal hold on power by Sennot: http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/foreign-affairs-defense/revolution-in-cairo-foreign-affairs-defense/inside-the-egyptian-militarys-brutal-hold-on-power/

\textsuperscript{15} Note: the information covers the condition of the military in Egypt at the time of the uprising.
enemies. As stated by Hiro,\textsuperscript{16} Savak had the power to “interrogate, imprison and eliminate opponents without challenge or scrutiny.” In other words, it was given the green card to practice all sorts of repressive actions (Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board, Canada, 1991).

The dissimilarity between the two revolutions, on the other hand, is mirrored through the media used by the revolts (in the Egyptian Uprising and Iranian Revolution). For that purpose, applicable communication theories and general information on the media used are discussed here.

2.1 Terminologies Discussion:

2.1.1 Globalization:

Globalization, as a term means that the world is taken as a whole or as one unit. It came as a response to societies and economy alternations that developed along with growing trade, investment and culture interchange among various nations. It is generally agreed that globalization went through two stages. At first, it revolved around the national basis (sovereign states, along with, their own economies and culture identities). Now, however, globalization is an interrelated world (or "global village") with one universal culture (Bieber, 2014). The concept of globalization had and still has impact on various elements in the world. This is obvious for instance at the economic and cultural levels in the world. Though globalization led to positive effects on the economy (such as more efficient markets), it made it harder for the states to control their own economies,

especially those of developing countries. For instance, the expansion of international trade is leading to more income inequality (especially for developing countries or non-industrialized ones). Second, international commerce is controlled by the transnational corporations and thus the stress would be on increasing profits disregarding the demands that target the developmental levels. This further contributes to the rift between the developing and developed world. As for globalization’s effects on culture and communication, it was first manifested in furtherance of the internet by the US and then in the current social media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.). Generally, however, globalization is considered a threat to cultural diversity because it challenges the local markets, traditions and languages (Baylis, Smith and Owens, 2013). It must be noted, however, that the previous points briefly tackle globalization because it’s not the main paper’s focus but its progress, especially cultural globalization, has led to the powerful stance of social media today.

2.1.2 Social Media:

As an element of globalization, social media has replaced television, broadcasting, movies and the press (the conventional media). Social media, much like globalization, has also greatly progressed at different stages. The first social media appeared in 1978 when BBS or “computerized Bulletin Board System” was created by Ward Christensen and Randy Seuss. This early example of social media helped people assimilate information among each other and to establish their events (Qeek Squad, n.d.). Still, the BBS was a solely local system because only users who were in the same area were able to log into it through phone lines (Gilbertson, 2010). The second stage came in the 1990s when the internet was in its first developmental phase. Alongside this new
technology other types of media were formulated such as Geocities and Blogger. The former enabled users to establish their websites while the latter established the first “blogging communities.” These two creations have further facilitated people’s lives. The third stage, with regard to media development, began in 1997. This period had witnessed the creation of AOL, a messaging service in which users chat with each other online. The final stage was in 2000 as this period witnessed the creation of the first “social network platform,” Friendster. There were almost a million users on that network. Friendster nonetheless was replaced by MySpace and Blogger that are affiliated with Google. With time, Facebook has substituted these two social media venues (Qeek Squad, n.d.). Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and other social sites resemble today’s social media. The new type of media has made it easy for people to intermingle among each other through the distributing, creating, and substituting information among a cybernetic group of people.

2.1.3 Revolution:

In Latin, Revolution means "a turn-around" that brings with it a shift in either supremacy or structural configurations. This transformation could be outside the political level (e.g. at the metaphysical, cultural and technical bases). The revolutions that bring such change are donated as “social revolutions.” An example of such insurgency is the “Industrial Revolution” (saylor academy, n.d.). Revolutions greatly differ in the tactics used, period, and the dogmas that created them. The aftermath of insurgenies yields transformations in the ethos, economy, and “socio-political” institutes. The latter has led scholars to be interested in studying revolutions. First, insurgenies were approached from a psychological standpoint, especially those of
Europe. Contemporary considerations, however, have incorporated international happenings with different social science outlooks (such as sociology and political science) (saylor academy, n.d.). Revolution, as a notion in social science, has different connotations. They could be found in three chief studies on revolutions. These works have considered revolutions to be both distinct historical happenings and the most important routes of change that have aided in shaping the modern world today. The first work was released in 1979 by Theda Skocpol's. Her book (“States and Social Revolutions”) considers revolutions through checking the scope of change in the society and the demolition of the old one. Skocpol mainly stressed on the correlation between revolutions and states. Her main focus was on tackling the ways in which interstate rivalry weakens states and thus leads to the possibility of a revolution to arise. The second work is the one of J. B. Barrington-Moore's, “The Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy,” which was published in 1967. In his book, he referred to how USA and England have paved the way to modernity through the “industrialized war” of 1861-5. Moore considered this to be a revolution. His argument was that revolutions can’t but be ferocious passages to a modern society. The third work is Karl Griewank’s “Der Neuzeitliche Revolutionsbegrijf, Entstehung und Entwicklung.” Griewank has considered the evolvement of revolution as a term through examining its first constitutional foundations vis-a-vis the updated interpretation which resulted from the French revolution. This allowed him to discover that state jurisdiction is essential in revolutions, which meant that revolutions could only be identified after the emergence of the modern state. The different scholarly works on revolutions have yielded contending presuppositions on revolutions -- or the comprehension of revolution as a
happening (saylor.org, n.d.). In International Relations (IR), few studies on matters related to revolutions (such as the diagnostic ones) are found. These were mainly the conducts of Kissinger, Rosecrance, Wight, Rosenau\textsuperscript{17}, Kim and Calvert. Their work has persisted throughout time. Generally, however, revolutions are indirectly tackled in IR, i.e. a diagnostic approach, such as Rosenau’s work “Turbulence in World Politics: A Theory of Change and Continuity” could be re-considered in a way to study revolutions. Rosenau stated that: “turbulent form of change and turbulent situations (of globalization) tend to be marked by quick responses, insistent demands, temporary coalitions, and policy reversals, unlike conventional diplomatic or organizational situations.”\textsuperscript{18} In other words, Rosenau is implying that drastic transformations require instant reactions (such as formation of new alliances). This change can then be related to that caused by revolutions. James Rosenau has also provided in his work a similar taxonomy of revolution through defining three categories of wars. There is a debate, however, on whether these can be considered as taxonomy of revolutions (Lipsky, n.d.). Rosenau for instance believed that “palace revolution or Latin American caudillismo” is an example of personnel wars -- wars that are initiated to take over the prevailing political power and its organizational functions. Huntington,\textsuperscript{19} on the other hand, has

\textsuperscript{17} A political scientist known for his works on connecting domestic affairs with the foreign ones

\textsuperscript{18} See: Concept of change and James N. Rosenau: Still international relations? By Murat Gül E-mail: http://www.academicjournals.org/article/article1379788149_Gul.pdf

\textsuperscript{19} A conservative political scientist who was mostly known for his book “Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order”, he was an expert in “defense” and international doings. See: http://www.thefamouspeople.com/profiles/samuel-phillips-huntington-2804.php
grouped revolution into four categories. These are: the “internal war,” “the revolutionary coup,” “the reform coup,” and “the palace revolution.” Huntington’s “internal war” category, however, is dissimilar to that found in the previous scholarly readings. It is instead replaced by “mass revolution.” The latter is parallel to Rosenau’s structural wars; wars in which the revolts intend to present societal and fiscal transformations in the society. “Palace revolution” is also analogous with Rosenau’s personnel wars. As for the revolutionary and reform coups, they could be considered as authority wars. An example of a revolutionary coup is the insurrection of Kemal Ataturk’s revolution in Turkey. As for the reform coup, it is exemplified by the Argentinian 1955 coup. These two revolutions are compared and contrasted based on the range of political configuration transformation. The Young Turks aimed to completely change the political authority that eventually led to formation of a republic instead of the Ottoman Empire. In the Argentinian coup, however, the rebellions wanted to restructure -- especially because of Peron’s failure to handle the economy (Tanter and Midlarsky, n.d.). Other scholars have also classified revolutions. Two of these scholars are Tocqueville and Brinton. Tocqueville was a French sociologist and political thinker. He was mostly known for his influential book, “Democracy in America.” It deals with individualism. He approached the study of revolution by undertaking an empirical tactic. To him, a revolution takes place when the elite pledge extreme shift at the societal, “political,” and fiscal levels, i.e. they would be toppled down after such drastic change.  

As for Crane Brinton’s, he is an American and Idea’s historian. In his book, “Anatomy of Revolution,” he considered the factors that signal the beginning of a

---

20 See article Tocqueville by History.com: [http://www.history.com/topics/alexis-de-tocqueville](http://www.history.com/topics/alexis-de-tocqueville)
revolution. Brinton has compared between coup d’état and main revolutions (e.g. French and Russian revolutions). The former is when the old elite are substituted. This is accompanied by shifts at the fiscal, societal and “political” levels.\(^{21}\)

2.2 General Overview on the Revolutions:

2.2.1 Iranian Revolution:

The Iranian Revolution is an assembly of protests with these protestors representing all facets of society (i.e. students and journalists). It was mainly, however, the revolution of the working class and the poor against the shah’s regime which, due to his brutal actions, had resulted in severe economic crisis. The crisis was caused by the huge drop in economic profits from oil, the country’s core source of revenue. Therefore, the chief reason behind the 1979 revolution was the state’s tight grip on the Iranian economy as it was the main wealth holder to the extent that it was the principal dispenser of wealth. This greatly affected all features of communal and financial life. First of all, the working class was affected by the developmental strategies subsidized by the state. This, ultimately, led to the division of the population. Second, the state restricted and politicized market, along with, economic materials. Back then, the Shah was blamed for the deteriorating conditions and the state’s tight control on the Iranian economy. He was considered to be the obvious force behind the inconsistencies in Iranian society and the poor circumstances that most Iranians encountered. This led

---

\(^{21}\) See Crane Brinton’s The Anatomy of Revolution (1938):

http://faculty.sfhs.com/lesleymuller/ap_euro/Abs_Cons/crane_brinton.pdf
different sections of the Iranian population to constantly complain about the conditions they were living in. On the other hand, there were economic organizations and actors, such as the bazaars, coming together against the state and the Shah (Cullis, 2014). Still, there are other causes that led to the revolution. One of the causes is the Shah’s initiation of laws that gave more rights to women. This, along with his cooperation with the West, angered the Ulamas (Cohen, 2009). Despite the fact that there was economic growth during Mohammad Reza Shah’s time, opposition grew against him, especially regarding the ways in which he utilized the secret police, Savak, to govern the country. The robust Shiite resistance against the Shah had almost caused the ignition of a civil war. The opposition was directed by Ayatollah Khomeini, who was exiled to Iraq and later to France. This is what had formed the start of the Iranian Revolution, especially when the Shah left the country and assigned Shapour Bakhtiar as his novel prime minister. However, Bakhtar, along with, the “Supreme Army Councils” was not able to control the situation. This was the time when action against the Shah’s followers began until Ayatollah Khomeini declared the Islamic republic with a novel constitution. This constitution mirrored his ideals of an Islamic government (Bahramitash, n.d.). It was Khomeini’s responsibility to quickly gain control and initiate an opposition since the Ulama of Iran were a mystical authority with sovereign rule within Iran. The Islamists, headed by Khomeini, took control of Iran through assembling religious organizations that on the surface were giving organizations, but behind the scenes were the backup systems of the Islamists (i.e. their supporters). Not only did these organizations provide help to the poor, but they also enticed volunteers from various
universities. Simply, these organizations were formed for the sake of attracting mass numbers of people for the protests (Paladin, 2011).

2.2.2 Egyptian Uprising:

The Egyptian Revolution of 2011 was a revolution against Hosni Mubarak, the former Egyptian President (Simmons, 2013). It was assembled by the youth, especially those from conflicting parties (Editors of Britannica Encyclopedia, n.d.). The protestors ranged from young, erudite students to doctors, lawyers, judges, Christians, women and TV workforces (Mainwaring, 2011). The revolution intensified when Mubarak refused to withdraw from power (Diehn, 2013). After the conflict with local authorities, an Egyptian man burnt himself next to the parliament. Two days later another, unemployed man burnt himself. Afterwards, there were wider protests against redundancy and political subjugation in Mubarak’s regime. One of the protests was called “Day of Anger.” On that day, many quarreled with the police. At the time, the opposition leader, Mohamed ElBaradei, returned to Egypt. He is a “Nobel Peace Prize” winner and former head of the “U.N. nuclear regulatory agency.” His attendance invigorated the protesters. At the same time, the “Muslim Brotherhood,” the country’s biggest resistance group, encouraged its young followers to join the demonstrations. Later president Hosni Mubarak announced on television that he will assign a novel government. However, he didn’t take into consideration any of the chief reforms that the citizens had asked for with regard to penury, price increases and unemployment. Afterwards, Egypt’s military increased its belligerence through controlling parts of the capital, but later the army officials accepted demonstrations as an expression of citizens’ “freedom of speech.” They
promised not to use potency against the protestors. Nevertheless, this didn’t signal the end of aggression since demonstrators clashed with Mubarak supports, especially when Mubarak announced that he will not resign. In fact, Mubarak ensured that the anti-government demonstrations in “Tahrir Square” were violent and bloody (The Los Angeles Times, 2012). It must be mentioned, however, as stated by Mustafa, that the Egyptian uprising didn’t happen spontaneously like the Tunisian one. Instead, it was prearranged from an earlier time. This is shown when the “National Coalition of Change” had suggested to revolt on January 25, 2011 in Tahrir Square to ask for political modifications. At that time, Mubarak had a speech to present in honor of the police (the “Police Day”)\(^2\) (Khamis and Vaughn, 2011).

2.3 Causes behind revolutions:

Generally speaking scholars agree on the main cause behind a revolution to be the wearing out of the “social order.” Goldstone,\(^2\) for instance, believed revolutions to be a process by which a society falls into unstable status. His five prerequisites of society’s disequilibrium also mirror those of the other scholars. These elements are: economic burdens, hostility amid elites, nationals’ growing disapproval of the unfairness, suitable international relations and the existence of an opposition dogma.

\(\quad\)


\(^2\) He is public policy professor at George Mason University. One of his books is: “Revolution and Rebellion in the Early Modern World”. See: http://jackgoldstone.gmu.edu/
The prevalence of such conditions makes it hard to sustain the existing order and thus this ultimately leads to the instability of the society. This aids in developing the revolution process through producing revolts, especially when unexpected incidents take place. Crane Brinton on the other hand, has offered illustrations on “structural prerequisites,” along with, general reasons behind a revolution (as stated in the below table 1, p.26). Generally, the “structural and transient” aspects together are considered to be revolutions prerequisite. The former causes are considered to be of comprehensive and longstanding nature. They then emasculate the societal institutes. They involve changes in anthropology, international relations, along with, exclusion practices (against assemblies) configurations. As for the transient reasons behind a revolution, they are practices carried out by certain persons or assemblies that stimulate the continuity of a revolution through the adherence of the revolts to undertaking additional engagements. Such reasons are loss in combat and protests against the state’s power. Structural causes nonetheless are the scholars’ main focus because they yield to the volatility that is considered by them to be the main reason behind insurgencies (Satkiewicz and Alalykin, n.d.). It is noticed however that there are repetitive patterns of revolutions or recurrent patterns in all revolutions. These elements are: demographics, foreign policy and genuineness of the state, agony and exploitation (Grill and DeFronzo, 2011). After all, as Trotsky (“revolutionary Russian Marxist and theorist”) stated, if poverty was the reason behind revolutions, there would always be revolutions because of the high rate of poverty in the world (Almond, 2011). Violent death, nonetheless, is the most important recurring element. The latter has been the most conjoint spark for “radicalizing” dissatisfaction in the revolutions of the past 30 years.
Table 1: Crane Brinton’s “Structural,” along with, General Reasons:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>“Structural Reasons” (^{24})</th>
<th>General Reasons(^{25})</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The persistence of the conflict amid powers (monarchy and those with lesser power) on managing the authority and profits</td>
<td>People from all social classes are discontented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The vast difference in the level of affluence amid the rich and poor</td>
<td>People felt restless and held down by unacceptable restrictions in society, economy or government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial and Industrial Revolutions effects</td>
<td>The scholars and thinkers gave up on the way their society operates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The persistent expansion of the middle class due to suburbanization, commercial, and industrial growth</td>
<td>The government doesn’t respond to the needs of its society</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


\(^{25}\) In Crane Brinton’s, an American and Idea’s historian, book “Anatomy of Revolution” in which he considered the factors that signal the beginning of a revolution. See: “Crane Brinton’s The Anatomy of Revolution (1938)”:

http://faculty.sfhs.com/lesleymuller/ap_euro/Abs_Cons/crane_brinton.pdf
| The persistent growth of the working class (19th century or later) | The government is unable to get enough support from any group to save itself |
| “Structural unemployment and re-employment” as a consequence to the shifts in the production processes | The government cannot organize its finances correctly and is either going bankrupt or trying to tax heavily or unjustly |
| Bigger political consciousness |
| Fiscal issues especially those resulting from war such as financial liability |
| Deprivation amid the lower class |
| A debase government |
| Financial emergency |
Table 2: Preconditions of the “Iranian Revolution of 1978” according to Brinton:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>People from all social classes discontent</th>
<th>People felt restless and held down by unacceptable restrictions in society, economy or government</th>
<th>The scholars and thinkers evaluate the way their society operates</th>
<th>The government doesn’t respond to the needs of its society</th>
<th>The government cannot get enough support from any group to save itself</th>
<th>The government cannot organize its finances correctly and is either going bankrupt or trying to tax heavily or unjustly</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The 1979 revolution was a revolution held by the entire society against the state (^ {26} )</td>
<td>People were annoyed by the Savak, or secret police</td>
<td>In the first phases of the Iranian Revolution, motivated academians started questioning the Shah’s</td>
<td>Most of the budget was allocated to providing services for the wealthy populates of northern Tehran. As</td>
<td>The Shah’s relation with the Carter administration is what initially caused the revolution i.e. the</td>
<td>High taxes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^ {26} \) See article by Hona Katouzian: The Iranian Revolution of February 1979:


28
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>regime</th>
<th>for the slums, they were suffering from a lack of services (such as electricity and public transport). This difference was a shame to a regime that had pledged for the start of a 'great civilization.'</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>alliance with the west led to the revolution and thus the government couldn’t resort to Western support to save itself</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

27 See the article: The Iranian Revolution: A Brief History and Analysis:


28 See Tyler Cullis article: Fruits of Iran’s Revolution:

Table 3: Preconditions of the “Egyptian Uprising of 2011” according to Brinton’s model:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>People from all social classes are discontent</th>
<th>People felt restless and held down by unacceptable restrictions in society, economy or government</th>
<th>The scholars and thinkers give up on the way their society operates</th>
<th>The government doesn’t respond to the needs of its society</th>
<th>The government cannot organize its finances correctly and is either going bankrupt or trying to tax heavily or unjustly</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Although Egypt’s “elite class” (wealthy businessmen) profited greatly from Mubarak’s privatization dogmas, they were against Mubarak’s backing of foreign</td>
<td>- the doggedness of governing by fear for thirty years, for example, through the utilization of “emergency law”</td>
<td>Egypt’s intellectuals (doctors, lawyers, jurists, instructors, lecturers, novelists, artists, journalists, engineers, and civil servants) were</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>The US government, a key supporter of Mubarak’s regime and Egypt in general, did not take a strong stance but later (when the uprising)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

33 See Make Tax Fair in Egypt: [http://www.maketaxfair.net/country/egypt/](http://www.maketaxfair.net/country/egypt/)
investment since it endangered their admission to Egyptian capital and markets. The poor, both farmers and urbanites, suffered from the growing financial adversities which were an outcome of Mubarak’s “social welfare” strategy.\textsuperscript{29}

\textsuperscript{29} Why Did Mubarak fall?: Cross-Class Opposition to the Ancient Regime in Egypt:

\url{http://hududbound.wordpress.com/2012/06/17/why-did-mubarak-fall-}
Note: The information in the above tables is taken from the literature review and from other web articles.

2.4 Message Dispersion:

2.4.1 Iranian Revolution:

30 See article by: Abdel Meguid, Nivin; El Banna, Sanaa; Korayem, Rana; Salah Eldin, Hoda: The Economic Causes of the Egyptian Revolution “January 25, 2011”: 
https://dar.aucegypt.edu/handle/10526/2710

31 Why Did Mubarak fall?: Cross-Class Opposition to the Ancient Regime in Egypt:  
http://hududborders.wordpress.com/2012/06/17/why-did-mubarak-fall-

Khomeini relied on music cassettes to disperse his message. He tremendously utilized audiocassette technology to disseminate his memorandum. He first attained the tapes from people who visited Najaf, Iraq, where he was living in exile. But later when relations between Iraq and Iran improved, more tapes were brought to him by the thousands of visitors allowed to come in. Still Khomeini had easier access to the techniques of recording and conduction when he was exiled to Paris in 1978. There were always two tape machines running in his house. Then, these were replicated for transportation to Iran through global telephone. Tehran music stores have also helped distribute these religious tapes through purposely placing them with what people were buying (Rahaghi, 2012). There are two additional tools for spreading the information. One was through using the “printing press.” Anyone who enjoyed financial affluence was permitted to spread their ideas through the “printing press.” Still, this method was only restricted to the upper stratums of society. After all, individuals who were not well-backed had no money to pay for printing their work. Therefore, the spread of ideas was limited to certain groups in society (Mag, n.d.). The final form of distribution was either through interpersonal communication in the mosques and souks or via printed materials such as booklets and brochures. This third method was heavily utilized to synchronize action and disseminate ideas, especially in the form of “open letters.” The letters were used by several groups such as solicitors, assemblies from the “middle class,” journalists and laborers. In the letters, the lawyers revealed their opposition to the judicial system. As for the writers, they wanted to eliminate “censorship” through giving a bigger role to their association. Workers on the other hand, had asked for corruption elimination -- as had been Khomeini’s request. This early media was
generally adaptable and effective in the revolution. It first aided in enabling acute structural features of the revolution. Second, it offered the real story of the revolution because it stated what was really happening. The latter was also facilitated by two covert news services: “Strike Bulletin” and “Solidarity.” “Strike Bulletin” wrote about the happenings abroad and sought to bring aid for the opposition in Iran. “Solidarity,” a weekly press release, was assembled by the “National Organization of Universities” (Rahaghi, 2012). Actually, when the revolution is observed, it could be discovered that the tools used to ignite it were the collective actions of the writers, publishers, lawyers, merchants and academics. They formed groups that advocated freedom of thought and the abolition of military tribunals. The strategy was gathering a huge number of people against the Shah through the formation of groups (Sepheri, n.d.).

2.4.2 Egyptian Uprising:

In the Egyptian Revolution the tool used was Social Media such as Facebook. It shaped the protest through aiding group creation. Evidently, people didn’t collect each other, but it is Social Media that joined them together. A study conducted by “Dubai School of Government” on the main utilization of Facebook at the time of the protests revealed that 30.93% of Egyptian protesters used this media to raise awareness and 29.55% utilized it to form actions. On the other hand, only 12.37% of the Egyptian people used it for entertainment purposes (Eaton, 2013). The density of connections was attained in Egypt then through “vertical threshold” and “horizontal expansion.” The former means that though there is a minute penetration of social media in Egypt, it was bypassed by being scaled vertically through Facebook. In the Egyptian uprising, for instance, the Facebook page established in the name of Khaled Said, a man cruelly
murdered by the previous regime, became a focal point for the protestors. These revolts were really motivated by the Tunisian uprising that removed Ben Ali’s government. As for the latter (“horizontal expansion”), it involves social media aid in expanding the lines of Egyptians in Tahrir Square (Mainwaring, 2011).

2.5 General Overview on Media Used:

2.5.1 Egyptian Uprising:

2.5.1.1 Facebook:

Facebook is a “social networking” site that was first initiated in 2004 by Mark Zuckerberg. It was first created for university students but soon expanded so that anyone could use it to communicate with whomever they want. Users do so through sharing pictures, videos and chatting with each other (GCF Global, n.d.). Although social media was mostly developed in the US, it did not take long for Facebook to become a ‘global’ online community. Still, Western citizens form the bulk of Facebook users. This puts them in charge of “online globalization” (Kim, 2013). Recent studies, however, reveal that the other countries are gradually becoming active social media users. An example of this is the Middle Eastern countries, but the percentages of their internet usage vary. A survey at Northwestern University in Qatar (on internet use in these countries) reveals this variance. It indicated: 86% Qatar, 82% Bahrain, 22% Egypt, 46% Jordan, 82% Saudi Arabia, 58% Lebanon, 60% Tunisia, 91% UAE and an overall average of 66% (Northwestern University in Qatar, 2013).

2.5.1.2 Twitter:
Twitter is also a social networking site where users display messages as tweets. These tweets could be followed by others without the need for any approval. This is unlike in Facebook where friend requests must be approved before connecting (Whatls.com, n.d.).

2.5.1.3 YouTube:

It is a site through which people either watch or upload videos without any restriction on the subject tackled. It was initiated in 2005 (You Tube, n.d.).

2.5.1.4 Flickr:

It is a mobile application that was initiated by Stewart Butterfield and Caterina Fake in 2004 (Butterfield, and Fake, n.d.). It is a site through which huge numbers of photos are shared by people without any expenses (Lowensoln, 2008). Photos could also be accompanied by any comments or notes (Spencer, 2006).

2.5.2 Iranian Revolution:

2.5.2.1 Audio cassette:

It was invented in 1962 by “Philips Company of Netherlands” (Bells, n.d.). It is also called “compact cassette” and it allowed people to record without the need of having high training or recording skills (Southtree, 2015).

2.5.2.2 “Printed materials”:

Generally they are bijou in dimension. They deal with information on a specific matter. Pamphlets or flyers are considered to be “non-projected audiovisual aids.” They are in
paper form -- which can be differently doubled over. They have different aims. Pamphlets for instance aim for memo commercializing and addressing community matters (Sood, n.d.).

2.6 Communication Theories (Old Works):

2.6.1 Castells book “Communication Power”:

It relies on his previous “Network Society” models. In this book, Castells attempts to create a “power theory” in relevance to the media of the new information period. He also considered the connection of “power” to “media.” The media he examined was the conventional “mass media” type and the media grounded in the internet or, as stated by Castells, “mass-self communication.” Castells considered “mass media” to be the mutually dependent media companies since they control the bulk of newspapers and TV, along with, radio stations. “Mass-self communication” on the other hand, provides ways of communication dissimilar to those of “mass-media.” For example, in modern society, there is a new depiction of connection of power to media. Castells also believed that power nowadays is generally defined by regarding the degree to which “actors” can impact each other. It is not executed anymore by immense “violent” practice. Castells assumed that people take or consider their decisions based on the way they process information and by rationality (as referred to in the post enlightenment) (Sytaffel, 2010). Second, “mass-self communication” reaches out to the international spectators through, for instance, a video on YouTube. It is “self-communication” since it is created by either professional or nonprofessional subscribers (also called “self-generated”). It also has specific discourses “self-directed” and internet
bases “self-selected.” It, then, goes with interpersonal and mass communication (Oxford University Press, 2010). Castells stated that: “in a world of networked mass communication, ‘one message from one messenger can reach out to thousands, and potentially hundreds of thousands’ as it proliferates through the network society.” In other words, Castells is indicating that with today’s “mass communication” a message can be transmitted to a huge number of people. He also contends that this brings people together in one virtual society, the “network society.” This society is based on trust since the recipient of information already knows the basis and thus the “wireless communication network” becomes a grid of trust. Together, the “communication networks” and those of “trust” can form an opposition that counters a recognized “target.” Castells simply believed that current forms of communication are cheap and easy to use. This would then encourage more people to utilize them. The huge reliance on such media leads them to have more impact than the highest “hierarchies” of the state (such as the military). In Castells’s own words: “networks constitute the dominant morphology of contemporary societies, whereby the availability of cheap microelectronics makes such organizational forms more efficient than highly hierarchical ‘pyramids’ of the state, the military, bureaucracy and traditional corporations.” In sum, Castells wanted to grasp the ways in which small number of people can deliver their message to more onlookers. The latter is revealed in the notion of “self-mass communication” in which it pledges to provide independence from the government and its configurations through more lenient consolidation (Eaton, 2013).

2.6.2 Harold Dwight Lasswell and McLuhan Models:
Lasswell tried to address ways of communication through stressing on: the sender (who), the message sent (says what), tool of communication (in which channel), receiver (to whom) and the message’s influence (with what effect). Lasswell achieved the latter by addressing four different types of analysis: 1) “content” (the topic of the message); 2) “media” (the medium used to transfer the messages); 3) “audience” (the receiver) and 4) “effect” (the message’s impact). These analyses then mirror Lasswell’s questions (communication theory.org, n.d.). His model was found to address both interpersonal and mass communication (Colombo, 2004). McLuhan has also focused on the questions and stages discussed by Lasswell but with different terminologies. As stated by McLuhan, his model (Medium Model) has seven stages: “1) source of information, 2) sensing process, 3) sending, 4) flight of information or transportation of information, 5) receiving, 6) decision-making and 7) action.” In other words, it focuses on: the source from which the memos were taken, the way they were perceived, the medium they were delivered in, the manners in which they were received and the reaction of the recipient. As for McLuhan’s questions, as he stated, they are: “what does it enhance, what does it make obsolete, what does it retrieve that had been obsolesced earlier, and what does it flip into when pushed to extremes?” McLuhan, then, is stating that four different aspects must be considered with regard to media. These are media’s: augmentation, over passing of certain matters while still retaining some of the elements and changes in extreme case scenarios (Ownkelly.net, n.d.). McLuhan has mainly believed that the “medium” resembles the memo (Chand, n.d.). It is a “symbolic environment of any communicative act,” i.e. it is the virtual world of the

communication action. Second, he assumed that networks are dissimilar in their compositions and the way in which they impact the various point of views. For instance, networks must be considered to check the ways in which media affects the general public and ethos (University of Twente, n.d.). His model was really an attempt to comprehend the impact of the media of his time (such as “print”) (Sandstrom, 2012). Lasswell and McLuhan’s models are simply used here since they clearly state the components found in any communication theory. They basically form the must-have models that are needed for the comprehension of communication, especially media. The below figures (1 and 2) mirror the elements (as mentioned earlier) of Lasswell and McLuhan models.

**Figure 1 Lasswell Model**:  

![Lasswell Model](http://communicationtheory.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/01/western-models-1024x287.jpg)

---

2.7 Recent Works:

2.7.1 “Contextualism approach” in Sage’s article:

It considered social media in relevance to “collective action” through taking the Arab Spring as a case study. For that purpose, it stressed on the “contextualism approach.” Contextualists, through their comparative methodology, stress on the political, societal, and fiscal differences’ influence on the role of social media in collective action. This is resembled in the two theoretical approaches’ focus on the political environment. “The first theoretical principle, politics comes first analytically, states: one cannot understand the role of social media in collective action without first

---

36See: [http://skyeome.net/wordpress/?p=59](http://skyeome.net/wordpress/?p=59)
taking into account the political environment in which they operate.” In other words, social media can only be comprehended when the political surrounding of the collective action (or group of people) is considered. In this analysis, two features must be considered: 1) the degree of unrestricted and uncensored access to social media and, along with 2) people’s enthusiasm. The second aspect is absent in a wealthy context in which people somehow have easy access to internet (used solemnly for entertainment). People in this environment would then be uninterested in politics. Yet, if this matter is considered “cross-nationally,” a negative association appears between the degree of communication technology available in a particular country and the level of demonstration. The mere existence of various political environments entails that the higher the level of internet and social media penetration, the lesser the degree of protest. Here, then, a question is raised on the role of the novel media in the uprisings. It is argued that they must only be regarded as significant tools for protest when there is enough access and enthusiasm. “The second principle, politics comes first chronologically states that: a significant increase in the use of the new media is much more likely to follow a significant amount of protest activity than to precede it.” In other words, they must first secure a maximization of social media utilization for an opposition to take place. The previous notion also exists in the “politics-media-politics (PMP) principle.” The PMP principle states that the mantle of the media in a political progression must be regarded on the basis of the political context alternations. This is because such change affects media’s execution (Wolfsfeld, Segev and Sheafer, 2013).
The next chapter then applies these proposed works on the dissemination method (the media used) of the revolts in the Iranian Revolution and the Egyptian Uprising. This sheds light on media’s real contribution.
Chapter Three

Theory Application

This chapter intends to apply the previous media works to the Iranian Revolution and Egyptian Uprising. First, a brief application is provided in the below tables (1 and 2) and then it is followed by a detailed explanation. Two elements of Lasswell and McLuhan’s Models are central here: transmission channel and effect. These are comprehensively explicated in the discussion of “Castells Communication Power Theory” and “Contextualism Approach.”

3.1 Brief Application:

Table 4: Lasswell and McLuhan’s Models Application

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lasswell’s Model</th>
<th>Mcluhan Model</th>
<th>Iranian Revolution</th>
<th>Egyptian Uprising</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Who</td>
<td>Information source</td>
<td>Revolts</td>
<td>Revolts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Says what</td>
<td>Message</td>
<td>Reasons behind revolution</td>
<td>Reasons behind revolution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In which channel</td>
<td>Transmitter</td>
<td>Audiocassettes, open letters, press and pamphlets</td>
<td>Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Flickr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To whom/</td>
<td>Receiver</td>
<td>People to revolt against the</td>
<td>People to revolt against</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5: Contextualism Approach and Castells Communication Power Theory Application

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Works on Media</th>
<th>Iranian Revolution</th>
<th>Egyptian Uprising</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contextualism Approach:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A) “politics comes first analytically”37/enough access and enthusiasm</td>
<td>A) enough access: no enthusiasm: Yes</td>
<td>A) enough access: yes enthusiasm: Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B) “politics comes first chronologically” or PMP Principle/ maximization in social media first</td>
<td>B) If applied to the media of the time, generally, there was no maximization of media due to their nature and to constant restrictions.</td>
<td>B) yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

37 “politics comes first analytically” that is social media can be only comprehended when the political surrounding of the collective action (or group of people) is considered. In this analysis, two features must be considered the degree of: 1) unrestricted and uncensored right to use of social media and 2) people’s enthusiasm
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Castells Communication Power:</th>
<th>A) Audio cassettes, open letters and pamphlets were cheap Press wasn’t cheap</th>
<th>A) Cheap: Yes Easy to use: Yes even when internet was closed in Egypt</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A) Media cheap and easy to use</td>
<td>B) These media are easy in nature but not in Iran since they were smuggled.</td>
<td>B) Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B) Do media have more impact than the highest “hierarchies” of the state?</td>
<td>C) No</td>
<td>C) Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C) Is there a “virtual trust?”</td>
<td>D) No doesn’t apply here</td>
<td>D) Yes: subscribers on social media sites (individuals or groups)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D) Professional or nonprofessional subscribers (“self-generated”) (Oxford University Press, 2010)</td>
<td>E) No doesn’t apply here</td>
<td>E) Yes: revealed throughout the revolution, i.e. through protestors forming and organizing their discourses, along with choosing the right internet base (especially after internet closure in Egypt).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E) Specific discourses (“self-directed”) and internet bases (“self-selected”). (Oxford University</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.2 Detailed Explanations:

3.2.1 McLuhan Model:

Considering McLuhan’s assumption that networks must be checked in order to depict media’s effect (University of Twente, n.d.), it is revealed that new social media has a bigger impact than conventional media. Social Media’s power rests in its ability to instantly and quickly convey messages that aid in group formation. This is especially shown through considering the media used in the past. Back then, the media was filtered which means that only when something appeared on the cover page or the evening broadcast was it taken to be significant. This is different today because anybody can newscast without requesting any approval. The previous points prove why social media is undertaking a growing role in whittling happenings. It is a chain starting with a small cluster of zealous people. Those people will influence the uncommunicative individuals, along with, making others take notice by participating in the protests. This is how, in a matter of seconds, we see millions joining in the protests (Stall, 2014). Twitter, for instance, enabled messages to be dispersed to a huge number of people within minutes. A “US-based market-research firm, Pear Analytics,” has discovered that the revolts mainly tweeted about the recent updates (at political and limpidity levels), changes happening and assembling. Tweets were simply not covering unworthy matters anymore (such as an artist’s show) (Sedra, 2013). That’s why in a mere month Mubarak was removed on February, 11, 2011 (Global Voices, 2011). On the other hand, the Shah of Iran was removed a year after the revolution had started (from 1978-9) (Libcom.org,
2006). Figures 3 and 4 below explain the latter point. In the Egyptian Uprising, four demonstrations in about a month’s time (January 25 and 28, along with, February 2 and 11) were able to remove the government. As for the Iranian Revolution, eight demonstrations in a year (in February 1979) were capable of toppling the Shah’s regime, i.e. at the time when Khomeini was allowed to return back to Iran (Global Nonviolent Action Database, n.d.). This indicates that the rallies in the Egyptian Uprising have stronger impact. This is due, as shown before, to the network used in the revolutions. Indeed, social media in the Egyptian Uprising gave an importance to the demonstrations through the manner by which it was conveying messages and covering what’s happening on the ground. The Egyptian people simply didn’t need more riots to topple the Mubarak regime.

**Figure 3: Egyptian Uprising Progress**
3.2.2 “Contextualism Approach”:

3.2.2.1 Egyptian Uprising:

A) “Politics Comes First Analytically” (enough access and enthusiasm): It could be discovered that there were enthusiastic people for an opposition to take place and easy access to the novel media (though there were restrictions by the government). A report done by “the Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG)”\(^{40}\) revealed that\(^{41}\) 23.2% of

---


\(^{40}\) It’s an autonomous “federal agency” that check US global media and at the same time it’s a board that controls these broadcasts (of the global media). See: [http://www.bbg.gov/about-the-agency/](http://www.bbg.gov/about-the-agency/)

\(^{41}\) Note: these percentages were taken weekly
Egyptians access internet weekly, but these are active users. These users have most probably accessed the Internet to attain the most recent news (80.1%) and to watch online videos (70.3%). Second, only 20.8% of Egyptians have utilized a social network in which 84.9% of them are “active users” on these sites. The striking aspect of these data is that though Egypt has the lowest percentage of internet usage, these users are energetic (BBG, n.d.). The proof of this is the Egyptian Revolution by itself because it shows that social media, as a component of globalization, can help in the uprisings. The Egyptian revolts had enough access to social media. This is, for instance, mirrored in the eight million viewers on YouTube in the early phases of the uprising, irrespective of communication blockage (Sedra, 2013). The revolts were able to surpass governmental restrictions initiated as a way to counter the opposition. These repressions ranged from shutting the internet down, disabling mobile infrastructures, detaining rebels, obstructing blogs, closing newspapers to holding back the “satellite signals” (Freedom House, 2012). The strategies used by the Egyptian revolts to overpass these tight controls were, for instance, through utilizing techniques such as “Hotspot Shield and Tor.” These two tools shield a user’s identity even when online. The revolts have even relied on “proxy server websites” to evade state’s control, especially before twitter jam. The government has also undertaken more severe actions that can be summed in the closing of the internet and mobile admittance. This shutdown persisted for a week, but activists were able to overcome it by relying on “FTP (file transfer protocol) accounts” to disseminate the videos to the global organizations. They even took advantage of the landlines to use the internet of adjacent countries, i.e. modems were used to dial international numbers. This was a dawdling way of connection, but tweets were still
sent successfully. Revolts have even sneaked into “satellite phones and modems.” A BBC report stated that many modems prevailed in their tweets. Second, it stated that not all Egyptian phones were able to make an international call to connect to the modems. As a response, Manalaa, an Egyptian blog, stated the ways in which mobiles, Bluetooth technology and laptops could be utilized to dial up a number. The report also noticed that Noor internet service was still operating at the time of the uprising. It was used by the Western companies and “Egyptian Stock Exchange.” The users of this service removed WiFi passwords in order for others to take advantage of this internet service. As for mobile shutdown, the revolts used different “message centres” that allowed the people to still utilize Twitter and text. The demonstrators have also benefited from global aid endeavors. For instance, Twitter and Google provided “Speaker-2-Tweet” that allowed phone dialing and listening to tweets without the need of the internet (El Tantawy and Wiest, 2011). Therefore, the revolts’ utilization of the “social-networking websites” enabled them to beat such repressive actions by the government. This explicates the reason behind calling the uprising in Egypt, “the Facebook or Twitter Revolution” (Freedom House, 2012). The below figures also mirror the previous points.

Figure 5 (p.53) indicates that Egypt was one of the countries that created the most tweets, i.e. 61% of tweets were from UAE, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar and Egypt. The tweets -- those of Egypt and of the other countries -- intensively covered the uprisings of 2011 (Interactive Middle East, 2011). Adding to this figure, a paper formulated by Kamal Sedra (the director of “Develop and Institution Support Center”, DISC) stated that: the number of Facebook users between January and February 2011 was equal to 5.5 million users. This data then support the previous points. It also reflect on: 1)
Castell’s model with regard to the media’s inexpensiveness and easy use, along with, 2) media’s impact being stronger than state’s hierarchies (Eaton, 2013).

Figure 5 “Volume of tweets in the Arab region”

---


B) “Politics Comes First Chronologically” or PMP Principle (maximization in social media first): Egyptians’ significant utilization of social media is the result of the government’s undertaking of “information technology” spreading out as a way of socioeconomic growth. This goes back to 1999 when the government provided cost free internet admittance and lowered the costs of purchasing computers. The government has also allowed the development of “internet access centers.” A report done by Internet World Stats, an internet marketing research firm, revealed that by February of 2010, 21% of Egyptians were able to have admittance to the internet. This has ultimately allowed a fast “internet penetration” irrespective of illiteracy, beggary and substructure restraints (Khamis, Gold and Vaughn, 2012). Bloggers, especially, took a strong stand with regard to handling leading issues in the beginning of the 2000s. The blogs were at first put out in English, but eventually, more online journals were released in Arabic. Consequently, these online journals have reached out more to the nationals. With time, these blogs grew in number. Activists then started relying on new available communication technology such as “social media” (Facebook, Flickr and Twitter). This was evident in 2008 when Egyptian activists used Facebook to make Mahalla textile labors go on strike thereby prompting what could be considered one of the


earliest instances of “cyber activism” in Egypt (El Tantawy and Wiest, 2011). At first, the movement coordinators didn’t rely on Facebook since at that time few were using this social site. However, the “Facebook Page” that they created for their protests collected 3000 supporters in one day (Rosen, 2011). Eventually it swelled to 70,000 members (El Tantawy and Wiest, 2011). The protestors have relied on mobiles, journal sites, Facebook, Twitter and YouTube to assemble their gatherings and state police actions. They also relied on such technology to help those imprisoned by the police (Khamis and Vaughn, 2011). The strike, however, was brutally intercepted by the state’s security forces46 (El Tantawy and Wiest, 2011). The state had also arrested one of the organizers who was tortured and threatened with rape. After he was released, the organizer declared the launching of the April 6 movement. He and the rest of the organizers have also examined ways of nonaggressive “civil disobedience” such as “Academy of Change,” an Arabic “site.” They were also inspired by the Serbian youth movement “Otpor” (Rosen, 2011). In connection to the movement, a “Facebook group” was created: “We Are All Khaled Said.” It was named after the man who was violently killed by the police in June 2010, and was assembled before the oppositions commenced. The creator of this page was at first unknown but later revealed to be Google executive Wael Ghonim. Ghonim aimed to enlighten Egyptians on democracy. This page amassed more than 350,000 members (Khamis and Vaughn, 2011). Mohammed Mustafa an, “Egyptian political activists,” has also stated other oppositions: the “Kefaya movement” and “Ayman Nour’s political party.” These have also failed

because, according to Mustafa, they have only gained limited backing from the people. Consequently, they didn’t yield an actual shift. This, however, doesn’t apply to the 2011 uprising since, as stated by Mustafa, the novel technology helped in acquiring a huge base of support through easily disseminating the matters related to the protest. He also combined new technological facilitation with the “street activism” that first helped in initiating the revolution. That kind of activism ensured that internet admittance is provided for everyone and secured populace approval for the protest. The latter was revealed in acquiring people’s monogram, as a way of verifying their backing (e.g. Dr. ElBaradei’s “Change Declaration” blueprint). This was achieved through different expeditions, house visits and also in creation of smaller extent protests as a practice for the more major ones. These were the movements that preceded the uprising. They revealed that the “Egyptian tech-savvy activists” were learning ways to surpass the state’s control on the internet. They did so through seeking the help of the “international community.” The April 6 Movement, for instance, has technically learned from the Italian anarchist party how to utilize “ghost services,” i.e. in the case of online checking, researching would be made invisible and thus the process of spreading information and assembling gatherings would not be hindered47. Others in the movement have

coordinated with the Kenyan NGO, Ushahidi\(^{48}\), in order to safely take “raw videos” and to secure this content on their mobile phones before publishing it online. A larger number of the protestors, however, had received training from a U.S. NGO\(^{49}\) on mapping tools utilization (e.g. Google Maps and UMapper) as a way of selecting the protest locations\(^{50}\) (Khamis and Vaughn, 2011). Maximization in social media use is simply then due to the increase in internet access. This is revealed in figures 6 (p.60), 7 (p.61), 8 (p.62), 9 (p.62) and 10 (p.63). Figure (6) indicates that at the time of the uprising, the percentage of Facebook users was 29%. There was an increase in the number of users from 12 % (in 2010) to 29%. The figure shows a “positive double digit growth” or a dual increase in the number of users in all the countries under examination. These countries had a kind of civil strife (Interactive Middle East, 2011). Figure 7 shows that there were 2, 160,000 tweets during the Egyptian Uprising. This figure is considered here to show how active social media use was in the insurrection. It’s irrelevant to focus on the countries with the most tweets (on the basis of figure 7).

\(^{48}\) “It develops open-source software for information collection and interactive mapping.” See: The Hopeful Network: Meet the young cyberactivists who’ve been planning Egypt’s uprising for years by Ishani: http://foreignpolicy.com/2011/02/07/the-hopeful-network-2/

\(^{49}\) “a group of journalists organized by a U.S. NGO”, see: The Hopeful Network: Meet the young cyberactivists who’ve been planning Egypt's uprising for years by Ishani: http://foreignpolicy.com/2011/02/07/the-hopeful-network-2/

Figure (8\textsuperscript{51}) reflects upon “Facebook penetration.” In April 2011, the period following the uprising of 2011, Facebook penetration rate in Egypt was 7.66%. Egypt was considered to be one of the “developing users” (that is the countries in red). This means that it is on the road to becoming one of the countries with considerable “Facebook penetration rate” (Interactive Middle East, 2011). It must be mentioned that Twitter had a lower penetration rate due to the uprising (as shown in figure 9\textsuperscript{52}). This is because at the time of the uprising, there was no Arabic interface for twitter. Second, 51% of “active twitter users” were in Cairo and 8% in Alexandria. The rest of the percentages were haphazardly distributed on the rest of the governorates (Interactive Middle East, 2011). Figure (10\textsuperscript{53}) clearly shows that the most utilized language used in the uprising was Arabic. That is 75.40% of Egyptians used Arabic to communicate via the social media networks (Interactive Middle East, 2011). These previous points accordingly show Castells previous mentioned assumptions. The first is that social media is easy and cheap to use. The second is that media has more impact than the hierarchies of the state. It also reveals the assembling of a network society that is based on trust. The creation of such societies was cultivated on the basis of social media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.).


\textsuperscript{52}See: Twitter Usage in the MENA region: http://interactiveme.com/2011/06/twitter-usage-in-the-mena-middle-east/

Castells, in sum, believed that people are joined together in one virtual society, the “network society.” This society is based on trust since the recipient of information already knows the basis and thus the “wireless communication network” becomes a grid of trust. The “communication networks” and those of “trust” together can form an opposition that counters a recognized “target” (Eaton, 2013). In the Egyptian Uprising, the recognized “target” was the Mubarak regime. The below figure (11, p. 63) clearly explicates the previous point (with regard to Castells’ point on trust) but through taking the Tunisian Revolution instead (although this can also be applied to the Egyptian Revolution). Figure (11) is simply stating the ways in which social media (specifically Facebook) can be an impact in the uprising, especially at the level of creating “creative consciousness.” The two social media aspects of rapid: information dispersion and people joining helps in forming a common awareness among the revolts (Marzouki and Olivier, 2012). This facilitates the formation of network on the basis of trust because there is no confusion. The revolts are all on the same page with regard to the source and the provision of the information.
Figure 6 “The growth rate of Facebook users during the 2011 protests, as compared to the same time period in 2010”\textsuperscript{54}

\textsuperscript{54} See Latest Facebook Statistics in the MENA (Q1 2001) by Interactive Middle East, it’s “region’s online destination for internet, mobile, and social media news”: http://interactiveme.com/2011/06/facebook-statistics-in-the-mena-middle-east-q1-2011/ (information taken from Arab Social Media Report: http://www.arabsocialmediareport.com/home/index.aspx)
Figure 7 “Number of Tweets in the MENA region (Jan. 1 – March 30, 2011)”

55 See Twitter Usage in the MENA Region by Interactive Middle East, it’s “region’s online destination for internet, mobile, and social media news”: http://interactiveme.com/2011/06/twitter-usage-in-the-mena-middle-east/

(information taken from Arab Social Media Report:
http://www.arabsocialmediareport.com/home/index.aspx)
Figure 8 “Facebook user penetration in the Arab region, plus Iran, Israel and Turkey (Apr. 2011)”:

![Facebook penetration graph](image)

Figure 9: “Twitter penetration in the MENA (Average between Jan. 1 and March 30, 2011)”

![Twitter penetration graph](image)
Figure 10 “The Primary Language you used to communicate on Facebook during the Civil Movement was”:

![Language Use Chart](chart.png)

Figure 11: Social and Political Awareness (Tunisian Uprising Case) ("This model (taken from Marzouki et al., 2012, Cyberpsychology, Behavior and Social Networking, Vol. 15(5), p. 243) amplifies the "virtual collective consciousness" (VCC) as a result of intricate contacts between Internet users within a social networking podium.")
3.2.2.2 Iranian Revolution

A) “Politics Comes First analytically” (enough access and enthusiasm) along with, B) “Politics Comes First Chronologically” or PMP Principle (maximization in social media first): There was only enthusiasm with the prevailing of repression. Iranians were enthusiastic about revolting. This is revealed in the first stage of the insurgency, i.e. University of Tahran students’ peaceful revolution against American president Nixon’s military backing of the Shah (Global Nonviolent Action Database, n.d.). The Shah then demanded the proscription of such oppositions. However, there were restrictions that prevailed in first the Shah’s disregard of the “Press Code of 1963” (as shown in table 7). Second, it was in the form of the smuggling of audiocassettes (Rahaghi, 2012). The “printing press” used was also limited since only the upper classes had access to it. The situation is different with respect to social media because everyone can disseminate their concept to thousands and even to billions (Mag, n.d.). A general overview of the press’s condition in the period preceding the revolution must first be considered. In that era, the majority of journalists, especially those who were professional journalists, had jobs in newspapers related to the government. They considered their work to be as “Khedmat”, or way of “service,” similar to that in the army. There are also journalists who worked in autonomous press with the purpose of educating the people. They either earned their money from undertaking other

56 See Article by Yousri Marzouki and Olivier Oullier: Revolutionizing Revolutions: Virtual Collective Consciousness and the Arab Spring: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/yousri-marzouki/revolutionizing-revolution_b_1679181.html
happenings or just relied on their own wealth. These reporters didn’t operate with the state. The 1978–79 Revolution revealed that the Iranian print media is highly inert. During that period, there was a massive increase in the state’s grip over the printing media to the extent that Iranians relied on foreign sources to know about the occurrences in their own country. The revolution was generally covered by the “Special Bulletin” of the governmental “Pars News Agency.” This included the revolts in and outside Iran, along with the growing foreign condemnation of the Shah’s government. The national journalists had also reported on the revolution, but usually it was stated that the revolts were against the nation. This is revealed in the “Ettela’at” and “Kayhan” newspapers’ (the “Silent Giants”) dependency on the state “news services” (“Pars News Agency, National Iranian Radio and NIRT TV”), i.e. though these two newspapers have their individual journalists, they relied on state resources to get the information they need. Ettela’at reached an extent of declaring the difficulty of examining information independently especially because of the state’s restrictions on the press (as shown in the below table 6). This limitation on the “printing press” and media in general led to the November 5 unrest of the “Iran Radio and TV Network” staffs. They revolted especially against the Shah’s imprisonment of journalists and repression movements against the press (Shahbaz, n.d.). At the time, the Media didn’t have more impact than the hierarchies of the state due to its very nature and it wasn’t available to everyone (contrary to what Castells has stated). There is also no virtual society, i.e. there was a network society different than that depicted by Castells. It was a society not based on the internet, but on the conventional forms of media (audiocassettes, newspapers, etc.). Trust, though it existed in such society, was not
easily formulated partially because of the state’s manipulation of the news (as mentioned from before). People were in a state of confusion because they did not know what exactly was taking place in the revolution. This is explained by Kurzman -- a professor of Sociology at University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill -- whose focus is on Middle East and Islamic studies) book. In his book he proposed that "critical mass" theory best describes the Iranian case. This theory indicated the hectic situations under which Iranians acted. They only got involved in the protest when they anticipated that others will also do the same. Kurzman, through interviews and bystander explanations, along with declassifying security documents, recognized the prevalence of the overpowering sense of misperception. This confusion has persisted in pre-revolutionary Iran and during the protest movements (Yee, 2010).

**Table 6: Press Condition in the Periods: Preceding and During the Revolution**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1952-3</th>
<th>1963</th>
<th>1974-9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>300 (25 are dailies)</td>
<td>227 (71 closed by the government through a “cabinet resolution” that prohibited the release of newspapers in Tehran)</td>
<td>100 (23 are dailies) in the year 1978</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>63 newspapers were prohibited by the government through the same resolution of 1963 (in the year 1974).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Almost 64 out of 100 newspapers were printed in Tehran. They stressed on matters related to “health, sports, religion, and science” (in 1978).
Six domestic daily newspapers (such as “Ettela’at /Information, Kayhan /Universe, Rastakhiz /Resurgence and Ayandegan /Posterity” (in year 1978).

Table 7: The Degree of Compliance with the “Press Code of 1963” 58

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A Journal released for the sake of the people must only serve their own benefits</td>
<td>Missing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journalist must not pursue a disdainful activity</td>
<td>Missing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journalism must rely on: a) objectivity, b) seeking the truth and c) accurateness.</td>
<td>Missing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Publication should only say the truth that suits people’s wellbeing without choosing any sides. The journalist should not expose his resources and release data that was required to be confidential.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Missing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Journalists must be aware that any information released by them could harm the people or governmental authorities. This is only allowed if it’s public “interest” to do so.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Missing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

The next chapter is analysis that builds on chapters two and three. It directly tackles the role of media and its contribution in the Egyptian Uprising of 2011.
Chapter Four

Analysis

This chapter presents analysis that is based on the previous chapters. It attempts to explain the real role of social media in the Egyptian Uprising. This then helps in grasping the importance of social media in the Egyptian Uprising specifically and in the Arab Spring more generally. For that purpose, a brief comparison between the two revolutions (the Iranian and Egyptian) would be first stated again here.

The comparison between the Iranian Revolution and Egyptian Uprising reveals the huge similarities between both. The two revolutions shared the same prerequisites. For instance, people felt restless, the government had practiced immense pressure; the economy was dwindling and there was no freedom of expression. The revolts in both revolutions were enthusiastic. They wanted to topple their regimes. The difference, then, is in the tools the revolts used to disperse their messages. As shown previously, in the Iranian Revolution the tools used were: the audiocassettes and printed materials (such as pamphlets). In the Egyptian Uprising, however, social media was used as a tool by the revolts. Social media as a network of communication proved to be stronger than the conventional media (according to McLuhan’s model). This goes back to the fact that this media has provided a comprehensive enlistment. It also: 1) enabled the formulation of “social movements”; and 2) prohibited the seclusion of information through grasping national and international considerations (ElTantawy and West, 2011). Second, social media, in its very nature, incurs no costs. This means that zero dollars are paid to access
social media, and it is easy to use. Third, it gathers a huge number of people in seconds and it targets all the different sects in the societies. There is no discrimination. Fourth, there is no need to have a huge number of users on social media to incur an immense effect or change. A user can create a page, for instance, on Facebook that attracts millions of users. This is evident in the Egyptian Uprising. One of the pages created was “We Are All Khaled El Sayed.” This page alone has further ignited the uprising. As shown in the below Figure (12, p. 72), there were only 131,204 active users of social media during the revolution\(^59\). This shows that there is no need to have a huge number of vibrant users on “social media sites” to make a big difference. Conventional media on the other hand, though it is cheap and easy to use, does not allow for individuals to quickly join forces and discrimination has constantly prevailed in such media. This is due to the state’s ability to easily manipulate the news according to its desires and demands. Though they were enthusiastic, the Iranians revolts didn’t have an increase in access to such media (“according to contextualism approach”). Instead, the revolts used other forms of traditional media (such as audiocassettes and pamphlets). The opposite, however, persists in the Egyptian Uprising. It is true that technology played a huge role in the Egyptian Uprising in facilitating access to social media. The Egyptians revolts have simply used the technology of their time to abolish anything that would hinder their use of social media. This underscores the power of social media as a source of


message dispersion, and a way of expression and uniting people together. The online tools’ significance can’t be disregarded. They were effective in making people go down to the streets. This is because of social media’s purpose in itself. These sites, such as Facebook, were used by the people to portray the horrifying reality through the shared pictures and videos of the government’s cruelties. This encouraged more people to rebel against their state. These social media sites have also helped in the “logistics” because time and place of assembly could be communicated on these sites (Rosen, 2011). This power was acknowledged by the revolts and that's why they reached out for any technology that would help them to reuse social media (especially after internet shutdown). Simply put, “social networking” has altered the anticipations of “freedom of expression” and the extent to which individuals and groups interconnect, rally, and acquire technical knowledge. These are predicted to result in even more voice, political impact, and involvement in the coming 10 to 20 years (Ghannam, 2011). The new form of media, then, has created the solidarity needed in the Egyptian Revolution, unlike the media at the time of the Iranian Revolution. “DW Academy” (a German global newscaster), for instance, has offered an empirical study by Eira Martens60 on the role of social media during Egypt's Revolution. Her research revealed that social media aided in classifying protests that permitted participants to form a “collective identity” through distribution of photos and videos. This increased the sense of “solidarity” that made people take to the streets (Diehn, 2013). Another report on the role of Facebook

---

60 She is a researcher at DW academy. She attained her master’s degree in social and economic sciences from Friedrich-Alexander University of Erlangen-Nürnberg, Germany. See:

http://training.dw.de/ims/blogs/wordpress/eira-martens-germany/
and twitter in the uprising was issued by Dubai School of Government under the title of “Arab Social Media Report”. It revealed that nearly 9 in 10 Egyptians and Tunisians said they were using Facebook and other social networks to arrange and publicize the demonstrations. “Social Bakers” (a site that publishes comprehensive information on statistics with regard to Facebook utilization in the world) has also revealed that Egypt has around 5.2 million Facebook users. This number is lower than 7% of the population (Vijayan, 2011). These findings are again showing that social media has played a role in mobilizing, empowering, shaping opinions and inducing a change (Huang, 2011). Evidence of these findings is revealed in the fact that ever since the January 25 revolution, internet usage has only grown more and more. An increase in the users of Facebook and Twitter can especially be noted. It is common now in Egypt to document any protest that may occur in the country through relying on mobile phones to capture pictures. These changes are believed to be sustainable and everlasting -- especially because people will not have a tendency to stop utilizing the internet. The internet would also expand with time (Open Society Foundation, 2013). A report completed by “eMarketer” reveals that in the year 2017 the “global social network” audience will be 2.55 billion. The vast operators of “social user growth” would be from the Middle East and Africa (eMarketer, 2013). After all, the majority of developed countries have clearly “penetrated social network” and Facebook audiences (Owen, 2014), compared to the Middle Eastern countries that have to cope with their governments’ obstructions.

This finding in other words came as a back up to the talks on the use of social media in the Arab Spring. see article by Carol Huang: Facebook and Twitter key to Arab Uprisings: report http://www.thenational.ae/news/uae-news/facebook-and-twitter-key-to-arab-spring-uprisings-report
Social media has been a significant tool that has helped citizens achieve the needed political change. After all, the protestors on the streets were people and not the social media gadgets (Facebook, Twitter and YouTube) (Abdulla, 2011). As stated by Philip Howard, social media wasn’t a prerequisite for the Arab Spring, but it allowed citizens to upset their national politics through, for instance, the formation of cybernetic “civil society” (by “online” advocates) to discuss forbidden communal matters (O’Donnell, 2011). Still, it must be stated that not everything displayed on social media is right or precise. An example on this is Bouazizi’s story (in the Tunisian Uprising). It was claimed that he was a university graduate selling fruits on the street. The truth, however, is that he never entered university, but millions believed the story. This then reveals that many inaccurate things can be assumed by the revolts to be correct, but may turn out to be incorrect. Despite such inaccuracies, the false notions may still be used in order to succeed in their revolutions (Beaumont, 2011). This further highlights the power of social media in creating a massive impact irrespective of whether the matters shared are false or correct. People have simply found the new social media (as an element of globalization) to be an easy way of expressing their thoughts. They feel that there are no more restrictions on them because nowadays censorship can easily be removed with the constant creation of new and highly developed programs. Social media is basically a tool that surpasses the government’s powers to the extent that even politicians are using it to express themselves. Social media is giving the power back to the people by allowing them to readjust the country’s welfare in a way

---

that works for them. The obstacles of terror and absence of self-confidence have been obliterated. This is clearly revealed in the Egyptian case in which these hurdles were substituted by "Egyptian pride." This meant that it was not any more tolerable for rulers to prevaricate in order to avoid responsibility for their wrongdoings. True confidence can now be found in Egypt in the people’s role and thus this has disposed the Egyptian people to only have faith in their own sovereignty (Radwan, 2011). Second, social media is helping people to quickly join through unifying common standards. It is simply demarcating a “we first thinking and behavior;” i.e. people are thinking and acting together on the basis of their interests and values (Mainwaring, 2011). Therefore, in Egypt, social media came as their savior from their long standing sufferings since for years the country's secret police and state have controlled the media and had – until then -- very effectively repressed most rebellious activities. It’s known, however, that for at least a decade Egyptians were practicing collective action before shifting online (meaning collective action at the social media sites level). For instance, citizens forced unresponsive officials to cancel certain policies through following strategies such as obstructing major roads with tree branches and burning tires. All in all, 49 protests were recorded in year 2001 by just one newspaper. By 2008, there were hundreds of such protests -- either big or small (Ghobashy, 2012). Undoubtedly, later revolutions would utilize social media, but the range of this usage by the revolts is still undetermined. Revolts would also seek out new ways of social media deployment (Lindsey, 2013).
Figure 12 “Number of active twitter users in the MENA region (Average number between Jan. 1 and March 30, 2011)”

The next chapter is a conclusion or wrap-up of the whole thesis. It briefly restates the chapters and adds further recommendations.

---


Chapter Five

Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusion:

The general conclusion links social media to solidarity facilitation. This means that social media provides the solidarity required for any revolution in an easier way. This was first detected through considering the role of social media in the Egyptian Uprising and second by comparing and contrasting between the functions of the new and conventional media (of the Iranian Revolution). The thesis’s sole focus is on linking solidarity enhancement to social media. It didn’t deal, for instance, with the ongoing debate between social media activists and protestors or whether social media helps in division (at the societal and political levels) or the number of youth encouraged to participate in the uprisings due to the new media or the role of military in revolution enhancement or the pros and cons of social media or whether social media was the sole factor behind the revolutions. The thesis also doesn’t underestimate the Iranian Revolution’s importance as the revolution was successful. After all, the Shah was removed thereby achieving the revolution’s main goal. Second, it changed Iran political pathway from a modern to an Islamist state. Again this shows that the Iranian Revolution of 1978 can’t be underestimated. The only aspect considered here is the media used by the Iranian revolts in the revolution. This helps in revealing the ways in which social media helps in solidarity formation (thesis hypothesis) through comparing the old media’s effectiveness with new communication methods.
The thesis then has mainly stressed on several questions for the sake of shedding light on social media’s role. These were: 1) what is the difference amid the new and old media? 2) How did the new media enhance the revolution? 3) What role did social media play? 4) What did the new media provide? 5) Is social media more powerful than conventional media? 6) How could social media be linked to a revolution? 7) What is the need of the new media in the Egyptian Uprising? 8) Did social media make a difference in the Egyptian Uprising?

The thesis reached its aim, social media’s facilitation of solidarity, through following the comparative methodology approach to reveal the real role of social media in the Egyptian Uprising. First a comparison was carried between the two revolutions. This helped in revealing the main difference between both, i.e. the media or the tool used to disperse information. Second a contrast was made between the two revolutions through taking the different studies: contextualism, Castell’s Power Theory, along with, McLuhan and Lassewll’s models. This has also revealed the power of social media in today’s world, especially in a revolution. The impact of such media is in the ability to make the revolution succeed in a manner that is different than the conventional media. Old revolutions, nonetheless, did prosper, but it was a rocky process. This is revealed in the removal of the Shah after a year from the start of the revolution. Social media is facilitating revolution formulation. Revolutions, in other words, are products of the century we are living in. They are quickly initiated and ended (by reaching the goals in a shorter time span). In sum, social media played a role in achieving the solidarity needed in an uprising through forming a collective identity and way of expression different than that of the conventional media. Simply, the new social media is a tool that
appeared with globalization. It can be said that social media is the friend of freedom and the enemy of dictatorship. So, social media, supported by the internet, has made the big difference in Egypt because without the social networking sites like Facebook, Twitter and YouTube, young Egyptians could not have built the force that finally removed Mubarak from power (Sifry, 2011). It seems that the “digital war” would persist in Egypt. This is clearly revealed by old military generals’ reliance on Facebook to make their proclamation and “Muslim Brotherhood” “hackers” deployment, i.e. cream of the crop of the Egyptian political parties are seeking the top positions in this fight (the “digital war”). “Social media technologies” in Egypt are now used by the youth (“left and liberal”) and the various “political parties.” These parties rely on this media as a way to foster their agendas. Today more are acknowledging social media’s ability to impact a country’s political inclinations. This means that digital (the ones at social media level) and non-digital actions would be utilized together. The former is needed to reach to wider addressees. “Social media technologies” have been adhered to and accepted by the Egyptian people -- even those having no admittance to internet and computers. This is especially because these technologies were considered to be new and redemptive. Nowadays, Egyptian advocates and politicians accept the fact that social media helps in the formation of “political capital” and in destabilizing the rivalry (Srinivasan, 2011). However, despite the incredible role of social media, it remains a tool and not more. As Ghonim\textsuperscript{64} stated, sites, such as Facebook, are simply tools made

\textsuperscript{64} He is a manager in Google Inc.’s Middle East and North Africa marketing divisions. He has emerged as one of the prime catalysts in the Egyptian uprising.
for joining people together and propagating information to the masses. These sites, nonetheless, cannot form social change on their own (Ghonim, 2011). This is shown in the imbalance between Egyptian-based grass-root movements on Facebook and the percentage of the country’s overall population. Ghonim also stated that: “we used the accessible tools in order to communicate with each other, cooperate and decide on a date, a time and a location for starting the revolution. Starting January 28, the revolution was on the streets but not on Facebook, it was not on Twitter because those were only tools to transmit information, to inform people on the truth about what's really occurring on the ground” (Ghonim, 2011). In other words, here again he is saying that these social sites were tools used by the revolts for notifying people of what’s really happening on the ground (Ghonim, 2011). Therefore, blogging and social networks alone can’t bring immediate political change. This has made analysts stress over the long-term impact, the development of novel politics, and the engagement of the civil society (Ghannam, 2011). On this point Marc Lynch, a professor at George Washington University, stated that the actual influence of political blogging is still likely to lie in the long-term impact on the individuals themselves through developing novel political capabilities, outlooks and relationships. Accordingly, the institutional political changes (the ones occurring over months or years) would not be used as variables to measure the impact of the new media technologies over the next decades but, instead, the emergence of these new citizens and networks. Indeed, it has long been obvious that social media has altered the nature of freedom of expression by giving an exceptional voice to Arabs. An example is the outbreak of tweets sent in festivity over Doha, Qatar, being chosen to host the 2022 World Cup (Ghannam, 2011).
5.2 Recommendations:

It must first be noted that there are many works on the role of media in the Arab Spring. There are also scholarly works that address the role of media through comparing and contrasting the media used in the Egyptian Uprising and Iranian Revolution (as mentioned in chapter one). Further studies are still being conducted on the true role of social media in the Arab Spring. It is a debatable topic especially because no one has ever considered social media to play a role in revolutions. In other words, it was not correlated to an insurrection. Instead, it was only considered as a way of socializing among people. This is reflected in the restrictions with regard to social media examination. These limitations start with the absence of sufficient statistical information to determine if there is a direct correlation between low or high internet access rates on one hand and potential for revolt on the other (International Relations, n.d.). There are then many approaches to the role of social media in the Arab Spring. For instance, Marc Lynch, director of the Institute of Middle East Studies at George Washington University, believed that social medial is causing “political polarization” because social media to him became a place to display where arguments are becoming intense and violent. This is indirectly causing a division amid the disagreeing parties (Goldman, 2013). The topic, role of social media in a revolution, can be taken from different perspectives. There is no right or wrong with regard to this matter. Studies then would develop with social media’s progress. For instance, because social media is becoming more graphical, the forthcoming scholarly works may then consider videos and pictures posted on such media’s sites (Arab Media & Society, 2014). Social media, in sum, would persist in having a role in the Arab region (at the social, fiscal and political
levels), especially because of the expanding penetration rates and number of Facebook users (Frangonikolopoulos and Ioannis, 2012). The mere proof of the latter is the latest “Arab Social Media Report.” It revealed that in early May, 2014 Facebook users totaled 81,302,064 while in May, 2013 they were 54,552,875. Egypt still forms a quarter of these users (around 24%). As for “Facebook penetration,” in May 2014 it reached 21.5% after being 15% in May 2013 (Mohammed Bin Rashed School of Government, n.d.).
References


Emarketer, (2013). Social networking reaches nearly one in four around the world.


87


http://blogs.computerworld.com/17810/is_the_role_of_social_media_in_egypt_being_overstated


http://dannyreviews.com/h/Unthinkable_Revolution_Iran.html