The Arab Spring: Understanding The Success of Protest Through Social Movement

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Abstract:

This paper investigates a puzzling result in the outcomes of the protests that swept across the Middle East in 2011-2012 commonly referred to as the Arab Spring. While uprisings have occurred in many different countries throughout this period, this paper attempts to determine what explains why autocratic, presidential governments such as Tunisia and Egypt have had successful revolutions, while monarchic governments such as Jordan and Morocco have not. For the purposes of this study a successful revolution is defined as one that overthrows its existing ruler. Many scholars have attempted to answer this puzzle through the differences in power structure that these different regimes afford their rulers, but this study sought to determine the differences between the two through social movement theory. By comparing two autocratic regimes, Tunisia and Egypt, with three monarchies, Jordan, Morocco, and Bahrain, it tested for certain variables of successful social movements to determine which are most apparent in successful cases. This study concluded that the unity of the elite with the regime in power, the existence of mobilizing organizations in a country, and the level of democratization in each country were the most important factors when determining whether a country experienced a successful revolution or not. Studying this time period, which continues to unfold, through the lens of social movement theory is an important undertaking for future research as this paper merely starts the process of this study and could be utilized to begin a deeper analysis of the Arab Spring through social movement theory.
The Arab Spring in the period from early 2011 to 2012 spread very quickly across the Middle East surprising many international experts because of its stunning success. Understanding how and why this happened has become an increasingly important goal for many scholars because of the ongoing nature of many of these protests, and global importance their outcomes hold. However, the Arab Spring has created a serious puzzle for many international scholars and Middle Eastern experts trying to explain the events that began in early 2011. What they are trying to understand is what explains why all the revolutions that have prompted regime change like Tunisia, Libya, and Egypt have occurred in authoritarian regimes, while countries with monarchic forms of government such as Morocco, Jordan, or Bahrain have maintained their governments. In this paper I will demonstrate how, through social movement theory, the factors of breaking the elite away from unity with the regime, the diffusion of the movements from their beginnings into other organized political, religious, and civil groups, and the role of democratization before the uprisings all help explain why social movements have had greater impact in some countries and not others. While this study is not a comprehensive work of every aspect of social movement theory, nor all of the Arab Spring, it provides an important early attempt at answering the difficult questions posed by these protests through the paradigm of social movement theory.

Many international scholars have attempted to answer this distinction between successful and unsuccessful cases of revolution during the Arab Spring but I believe their focus has not been sufficiently inclusive. The only serious studies conducted on the cases of the Arab Spring have all approached the issue from the side of the governments and what factors they hold that explains the difference in results of protest between
authoritarian governments and monarchies in the Arab Spring. Some, such as Jack Goldstone in Foreign Affairs believe it is a result of the weakness of authoritarian governments, and “the revolutions unfolding across the Middle East represent the breakdown of increasingly corrupt sultanistic regimes,” because recent economic “gains have bypassed the majority of the population, being amassed instead by a wealthy few.”

On monarchies, there are some like Marc Lynch in Foreign Policy magazine that believe it can be explained by the stronger institutions of monarchic government, and it “should force us to look harder at the specific mechanisms of control, which may or may not sustain specific monarchs.” While these are important questions, I believe they ignore a third aspect, which is the factors among protesters in these countries that lead to the success or failure of a revolution in these countries. I define success as the overthrow of a country’s regime due to popular protest. To answer this question I will view this problem through the lens of social movement theory to try and discern why some countries have succeeded in regime change others have not. In order to do this I will first need to review social movement theory literature and create a method from past work to inform my own research on these revolutions.

**Literature Review: Decoding Social Movements**

In order to frame my research in social movement theory it is important first to recount the history of social movement theory, where it has come from to what it is today so that I can both identify its evolution and what parts of its definition can be utilized for my own investigation into the social movements of the Arab Spring. I will begin at the

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1 Goldstone, Jack A. “Understanding the Revolutions of 2011 Subtitle: Weakness and Resilience in Middle Eastern Autocracies,” *Foreign Affairs*, pg. 3
2 Lynch, Marc. “The Arab Monarchy Debate,” *Foreign Policy Magazine*
start of modern social movement theory in the mid 20th-century as it holds the greater applicability to my own study. I will discuss how this evolved into political process theory, or PPT, which sought to outline the structure of social movements. From there, I will expand into the contentious politics theory, which seeks to evolve the theories of PPT and resolve its critiques, and is the modern form of social movement theory that exists today.

The start of a formulated theory for social movements began in the mid-20th century before being formally identified in political process theory, or PPT. Before PPT, the “prevailing social scientific view [was] that protestors and other social movement participants were irrational mobs, overwhelmed by a collective mentality.”\(^3\) As social scientists began to study social movements more closely and try to determine their causes, this perception changed. An early advocate for this was Mancur Olson, whose “analysis of collection behavior turned old notions about the irrationality of protestors on its head, exploring the rational and deliberate choices that individuals made before joining a movement.”\(^4\) Another advancement towards a formal social movement theory was the contribution of McCarthy and Zald who found the level of oppression leveled upon a populace to be insignificant and instead emphasized “societal support” for the movement, essentially arguing that a successful social mobilization required certain resources, linkages to other movements, and external support.\(^5\) Lastly, Piven and Cloward argued the importance of “exceptional conditions” in the economic and political system that would afford the masses the opportunity, or motivation, to organize in favor

\(^3\) Caren, Neal. “Political Process Theory,” Blackwell Encyclopedia of Sociology, pg. 1  
\(^4\) Ibid.  
of their interests. While each of these developments was important in the growth of social movement theory, it is political process theory that is considered the first true formulation.

The beginning of political process theory can be found in Charles Tilly’s *From Mobilization to Revolution*, but it was not until Doug McAdam’s *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency* that the theory was fully formed. Tilly argued that the interaction of three elements, interest, organization and opportunity, was what explained the level of mobilization and activity in any movement. While important to PPT, it was McAdam’s work that became the defining text for PPT. First, we should note that he borrowed the title of political process from Tilly because he believed social movement to be political rather than psychological, and that is was truly a process. He argued that social movements were, “rational attempts by excluded groups to mobilize sufficient political leverage to advance collective interests through non-institutionalized means.” This definition became political process theory, the leading social movement theory for the latter half of the 20th century. Eventually, criticisms led to an adjustment of PPT, creating the new theory of contentious politics.

Political process theory began to fade as a leading theory when it received heavy criticism as an overly structural theory that focused too much on external factors and

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6 Piven, Frances Fox and Richard A. Cloward. “Poor People’s Movements: Why They Succeed, How They Fail,” Pantheon Books, New York, pg. 6 and 7
7 Caren, “Political Process Theory,” pg. 2
analyzing non-structured features as structures. Many of the strongest supporters of political process theory, such as McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly, acknowledged the criticisms of PPT and sought to address them. This took the form of *Dynamics of Contention*, a book that broke away from “the static, individualistic, and often reified character of previous analyses – including our own,” which they thought “bar[red] the door to dynamic, interactive analysis of mobilization and demobilization.”

Instead, they created a new theory called contentious politics, which meant, “situating social movements alongside industrial conflicts, wars, interest group politics, nationalism, and democratization among others,” in order to compare the mechanisms of social movement. By this they hoped to, “uncover recurring sets of mechanism that combine into robust processes which, in turn, recur over a surprising number and broad range of episodes.” They sought to change the process that either created overarching laws that applied to all social movements, or limited it to specific interactions or mechanism in a microscopic case-by-case basis. Instead, they believed comparison between separate cases of contention would help illuminate the “processes that animate their dynamics,” and through this identify the more nuanced components of social movements that can be applied across different mobilization movements to decode or study them. The work of *Dynamics of Contention* offers the most helpful typology for studying social movements in real world cases.

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10 Caren, “Political Process Theory,” pg. 3
11 McAdam et al. “Dynamics of Contention,” Cambridge University Press, pg. 73
12 Bevington, Douglas and Chris Dixon. “Movement-relevant Theory: Rethinking Social Movement Scholarship and Activism,” Social Movement Studies, pg. 188
13 Ibid, pg. 314
14 McAdam et al. “Dynamics of Contention,” pg. 314
The theory of contentious politics is the most current evolution of social movement theory, and as such what I will rely most heavily upon for my own analysis of social movements in the Arab Spring. To that end the next section will discuss the methodology of my research to determine the causes of success for uprisings in some of the Arab autocratic states, and hopefully help explain their failure in the Arab monarchies.

Methodology: Comparing Movements

In order to research the different outcomes during the Arab spring among authoritarian states and monarchies, I will compare and contrast the experience of several case studies. These cases are the authoritarian states of Tunisia and Egypt, and the monarchies of Morocco, Jordan, and Bahrain. I have chosen to leave out Libya, another successful revolution against an autocrat, because of its complications involving the civil war and foreign interference. As well, the list of monarchies that have resisted protest goes beyond these three, but I feel that these cases offer an ideal diversity of location, economy, and ethnic makeup to control for these differences. In order to compare these cases, I will use social movement literature to help construct a number of independent variables that can then be tested in each case.

Through the theory of contentious politics I have identified several variables important to the formation of social movements that can be used to investigate these movements in the Arab states. Specific to Dynamics of Contention, I plan to investigate the variables of the constitution of new political actors and identities, the polarization of political groups, and scale shift in a social movement. In a separate work by Sidney McAdam et al, “Dynamics of Contention,” pg. 314
Tarrow, Power in Movement, I have identified the variables of external resources, (i.e. financial support or free time for activists) internal innovation, (i.e. adopting existing technologies to the use of social mobilization) and organization diffusion and differentiation (i.e. established organizations joining a movement in the name of social mobilization). Finally, from Charles Tilly’s Social Movements 1768-2012, I have chosen the last variable of democratization level of a country, as it has been proven to promote social mobilization.

These are the variables I will utilize to investigate the separate cases of social movement within the Arab Spring, but for that purpose they must be operationalized into testable factors. First, I will measure the variables provided by McAdam et al, the first of which is constitution of new political actors and identities by examining the composition of the groups in each social movement, to determine if any parts of the population (i.e. doctors, lawyers, students, etc) were drawn into the movement, distinct from established political or religious organizations. Second, to determine the polarization of political groups I will test to see whether elite unity existed in each country, by whether or not the elite broke with the regime. The last variable is the scale shift of a social movement, which I will judge by seeing whether the social movement in each country spread nationally to multiple cities or whether it remained localized in a single area.

The first variable from Tarrow is the variable of external resources, which will be measured by determining if the social movement in a country received foreign financial support or training. The next variable is internal innovation, which I will test by seeing to what extent social media (facebook, twitter, etc.) was utilized during each movement to

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16 Tarrow, Sidney. “Power in Movement,” Cambridge University Press, pg. 131-135
measure how existing technology was adapted. Finally, the variable of organizational diffusion will be measured by seeing if established organizations and groups in society joined the wider social movement.

Finally, from Tilly’s separate work on social movements, I derive the seventh and final variable of the level of democratization prior to 2011, as it promotes mobilization and will measure that through a democracy score given by the Global Democracy Ranking.

In order to determine the significance of these measures of a social movement in each case I will compare the presence of these variables across countries. Starting first with the successful instances of social movement in Tunisia and then Egypt, I will move on to the unsuccessful countries starting with Morocco, Jordan, and concluding with Bahrain. My hypothesis for all of these factors is that if they are present in certain countries than those movements will have been a success, and if absent in certain countries than they will have failed because they are necessary for a robust social movement. By comparing each country across these variables, and more broadly the separate groups of successful and unsuccessful movements, I hope to tease out some of the important factors that explain the success or failure of social movement groups.

Research: Testing the Elements of Mobilization

The Successful Uprisings:

The first country to be examined according to these variables is the country where the Arab Spring began: Tunisia. For the first variable, the social movement in Tunisia
created many new actors because, “although the protests originated from socio-economic problems, they quickly became political in nature, embracing a large constituency, which transcended regional distinctions and ranged from jobless graduates and young students to independent unionists, journalists, teachers, lawyers, and so on.” \(^{18}\) The next variable of fractured elite unity is also present in Tunisia as “the army’s refusal to intervene against protesters partly contributed to the success of the mobilization.” \(^{19}\) In addition to the military elite, the professional elite broke with the regime as thousands of Tunisia’s lawyers went on strike on January 6th to protest police brutality. \(^{20}\) The next variable of scale shift is also true for Tunisia as the initial protests began in Sidi Bouzid and within a week had spread to Kairouan, Sfax and Ben Guerdane, before engulfing much of the country. \(^{21}\) Next, the role of foreign financial and technical backing was not actually present in Tunisia, as there were no pro democracy organizations or social mobilization training sessions offered to its people. The next variable, internal innovation, was certainly present in Tunisia as many of the youth utilized existing social media technology “to mobilize quickly even in the absence of organizational structures and were instrumental in spreading information about the upheaval both within and outside the country. In spite of the regime’s restrictions over the media, many Tunisians were able to get round the regime’s censorship.” \(^{22}\) The next variable of organizational diffusion was also present in Tunisia as several established groups with their own

\(^{18}\) Paciello, Maria Cristina. “Tunisia: Changes and Challenges of Political Transition,” MEDPRO Technical Report No. 3, pg. 8
\(^{19}\) Ibid, pg. 9
\(^{20}\) Amara, Tarek. “Tunisian lawyers strike, civil unrest continues,” Reuters
\(^{21}\) Rifai, Ryan. “Timeline: Tunisia’s uprising” al-jazeera
\(^{22}\) Paciello, Maria Cristina. “Tunisia: Changes and Challenges of Political Transition,” pg. 9
organizational structures joined the movement, such as the labor unions which, “not only helped toppled Ben Ali, but also serv[ed] to determine the future of the Tunisian interim government and civil society.” The final variable of democratization existed in Tunisia as it was granted a score increase of 0.3 from 2006-2010 by the Global Democracy Ranking, which represented greater democratization prior to the protests. Of the seven variables supportive of social movements, Tunisia was found to have six of them. The next country is its fellow successful revolution, the Arabic Republic of Egypt.

The Arab Spring spread from Tunisia when it was sparked in Egypt by the death of a young man named Khaled Said in the city of Alexandria, who was beaten to death by police. The first variable was present in Egypt as well, as the movement incorporated many diverse members of society, which “include not only the most impoverished of Egypt’s urban slums and rural farmers and peasants. They also include the educated, the middle classes, even many of the wealthy.” The second variable of fractured elite unity was also present, as unlike the brutal police force, “the military, to the contrary, overwhelmingly refused to confront the popular movements. While Egypt’s top military brass is a privileged cohort closely linked to the Mubarak regime, the army itself was made up of generally poor conscripts, who were simply not willing to turn their guns on fellow citizens.” The next variable, scale shift, was present in Egypt as the Day of Wrath planned by the Egyptian movement occurred not only in the capital of Cairo but

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23 Allen, Michael. “Tunisian unions eclipsing parties as democratizing force?” Democracy Digest
24 Global Democracy Ranking
25 Bennis, Phyllis. “Tunisia’s Spark and Egypt’s Flame: The Middle East is Rising,” Foreign Policy in Focus
26 Ibid.
spread to Ismailia and Suez, east of Cairo and to other Nile Delta cities. The fourth variable of external resources was present in Egypt, because “the April 6 Youth Movement in Egypt…received training and financing from groups like the International Republican Institute, the National Democratic Institute and Freedom House,” and “some Egyptian youth leaders attended a 2008 technology meeting in New York, where they were taught to use social networking and mobile technologies to promote democracy.”

Another variable, use of social media, was widely present in the Egyptian organization as, “opposition groups such as Kefaya and the April 6 Youth Movement also organized protests and developed online networks through facebook, blogs, and Twitter.” As well, organizational diffusion variable is present in Egypt as well when the Muslim Brotherhood, who opposed the protests at first, joined the movement as an organization helping to provide logistical support for the protesters but refusing to take a religious tone, and did not play a leading role.

The final variable, which is prior democratization of the country, was clearly present in Egypt as it improved its democratic rating by 0.5 and its ranking one place to 58 out of 100 countries in the period from 2006-2010. While this improvement may seem slight, it was still a positive democratic improvement for the country leading up to the protest movement.

In both cases of successful revolution it seems many elements of social movement were widely present. While Tunisia was found to positively have six of seven variables, Egypt was found to have all seven in its social movement that ultimately led to the

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27 “Timeline: Protests in Egypt,” Reuters
30 Ibid.
31 Global Democracy Ranking
ousting of both autocratic leaders in these countries. This could be a helpful clue as to why these two movements were so successful, but it is important to first compare them to the cases of unsuccessful protest in order provide any useful conclusions.

**The Unsuccessful Uprisings:**

The first monarchic government we will examine for these variables is the Kingdom of Morocco. For the first variable, Morocco receives a mixed score because on the one hand there were wider protests with several thousands of people that brought “previously disengaged demographics to the forefront of Moroccan political participation: namely youth, women, and lower socio-economic classes,” yet “it has not yet managed to forge the linkages to other segments of society that were so crucial in Tunisia and Egypt,” like unions or groups of professionals. The next variable, a fractured elite unity, was not achieved in Morocco where the military is totally loyal and controlled by the king and the protesters still seek “an end to elite privilege and corruption – they want elites to share political power and wealth,” something that has pushed the elites even closer to the current regime in order maintain the status quo.

Another variable, which is scale shift, had been achieved as the protests that began on the 20th of February 2011 centered on the capital Rabat, yet were replicated in other cities such as Casablanca and Marrakesh. The next variable, foreign support through training or financial support, is very poor or non-existent in the social movement of Morocco, as only two of the six major international agencies working there provide training as

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32 Rahman, Zahir. “Morocco’s bottom-up movement for reform,” Foreign Policy
33 Larence, Adria. “Election dilemmas for Morocco’s protests movement,” Foreign Policy
34 Ibid.
35 “Middle East and North Africa in turmoil,” The Washington Post
opposed to development and it is provided only to political parties and the parliament, not social movement organizations. Another variable that is present in Morocco is its ability to innovate current technology as the primary organizer of the movement, the February 20th Movement, “used youtube and facebook as its primary means of communication,” and for, “explaining their reasons for joining protests to pursue democratic reform.” However, the next variable of organizational diffusion is not as prevalent in Morocco. It was unable to expand the movement to religious groups because of the King’s role as religious leader, nor to the very important labor unions because as Mohamed Gamhor, the director of the Moroccan Workers Union (UMT), stated they felt further demonstrations were unnecessary because, “all our demands were met 100 percent…we made real gains in wages and democratic rights. We have a new parliament.” The final variable, a prior increase in democratization, is also lacking in Morocco as it has fallen two places down to 77th on the list of 110 countries and lost 0.1 in its democracy score for 2006-2010. Morocco held only two variables completely, and just partly in two other cases (counted as one half each) for a total of three out of seven. The next case is the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

The Kingdom of Jordan is one of the more stable countries in the region, and seen as the most pro-Western country in the Middle East, yet that did not save it from protests in early 2011. The first variable, new actors being mobilized, did occur in Jordan

36 Joyce, Mary. “Morocco Raises its Voice: A Brief Analysis of the Political NGO Sector,” Fulbright, pg. 7
37 Dewey, Taylor et al. “The Impact of Social Media on Social Unrest in the Arab Spring,” Stanford University, pg. 25
38 Finamore, Carl. “Different Seasons of the Arab Spring: Reports from Morocco and Tunisia,” BeyondChron
39 Global Democracy Rating
with a very, “heterogeneous make-up of protests involving Islamists, liberals, leftists, and East Bank tribes,” which represent a startling number of agendas united in common economic grievance against the government.\(^{40}\) The second variable, disrupting elite unity, was not satisfied because, “Jordan’s problem is with a group of ‘entrenched and ossified’ elites that have turned against the king and have a vested interest in the status quo,” which makes the elite supportive of maintaining the current regime so that it can continue “providing a particularly conducive environment for corruption.”\(^{41}\) The next variable, scale shift, is present in Jordan as along with the protest of thousands in the capital, “people also took to the streets in six other cities across the country after the noon prayers.”\(^{42}\) The next variable of foreign technical or financial support for the movement is partly present in the country, with the National Democratic Institute conducting student talks at eight universities, and works with several civil society organizations on parliamentary monitoring, policy research, and election monitoring, which contributes to a stronger civil society, but did not directly support the social movement.\(^{43}\) Another variable, internal innovation, occurred partly in Jordan as the smaller 24 March Movement used facebook to organize, but the larger groups like the Islamic Action Front utilized standard television to announce plans to its followers.\(^{44}\) The next variable, organizational diffusion, was achieved in Jordan as the initial 24 March Movement was joined by the Muslim Brotherhood in protests over rising fuel and food prices and later

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\(^{40}\) Hamid, Shadi and Courtney Freer. “How Stable is Jordan? King Abdullah’s Half-Hearted Reforms & The Challenge of the Arab Spring,” Brookings Doha Center, pg. 1

\(^{41}\) Ibid, pg. 5-6

\(^{42}\) “Thousands protest in Jordan,” Al-jazeera

\(^{43}\) The National Democratic Institute, Jordan

\(^{44}\) Dewey, Taylor et al. “The Impact of Social Media on Social Unrest in the Arab Spring,” pg. 21
the largest opposition party, the Islamic Action Front, decided to join a boycott of the November elections.\textsuperscript{45} Lastly, prior democratization for Jordan cannot be measured because data for its democracy rating is unavailable, however freedom house declared it to be unfree in 2011, which does not bode well for its presumed ranking.\textsuperscript{46} The Kingdom of Jordan has a more of these variables of social movement than the Kingdom of Morocco with about three and half out of six, as democratization is not applicable. The next and final case is the Kingdom of Bahrain.

The Kingdom of Bahrain saw massive public protests against the ruling Khalifa family, but managed to maintain its hold on power through brutal crackdowns. The first variable, the creation of new actors, was certainly true of this movement because “although initially small in scale and predominantly confined to Shia villages outside Manama, the demonstrations gathered momentum after Bahraini police killed two protesters,” and the movement grew into thousands from all parts of society and relocated to the capital’s Pearl Roundabout.\textsuperscript{47} The second independent variable, break off of elite unity, did not occur in Bahrain as “the old elite remains unaccountable at high levels for the abuses of power over the past year,” and relies upon the current regime to maintain this unaccountability and lifestyle.\textsuperscript{48} The next variable, scale shift, did not occur in the Bahrain movement because almost all of the protests were localized around the capital Manama at the Pearl roundabout.\textsuperscript{49} Another variable, the support of foreign

\textsuperscript{45} Hamid, Shadi and Courtney Freer. “How Stable is Jordan? King Abdullah’s Half-Hearted Reforms & The Challenge of the Arab Spring,” pg. 1
\textsuperscript{46} Freedom House
\textsuperscript{47} Ulrichsen, Kristian Coates. “Bahrain’s Aborted Revolution,” London School of Economics pg. 29
\textsuperscript{48} Ibid, 32
\textsuperscript{49} “Timeline: Anti-government protests in Bahrain,” Reuters
organizations in training or funding capacity, is applicable for the Bahrain case because, “the Bahrain Center for Human Rights…received training and financing from groups like the International Republican Institute, the National Democratic Institute and Freedom house.”\textsuperscript{50} However, this case does not contain the variable of organization diffusion, as much of the civil society interested in promoting democracy and government transparency was already involved in the protests in the beginning, so there were few groups to join the movement. Finally, the variable of democratization in Bahrain also did not exist prior to the movement, as Bahrain’s democracy rating decreased by 0.5 from 2006-2010 and slipped three places to a ranking of 93 out of 110 countries.\textsuperscript{51} Bahrain was found to only hold three out of seven tested variables important towards social movements. Now that we have examined each of the case studies in-depth, it will be helpful to summarize the major findings from these analyses.

\textbf{Research Summary:}

In this section we will summarize the main results of the comparison study and also examine the implications of these results for resolving the question of what explains the difference in result for the social movements in Tunisia and Egypt versus Morocco, Jordan, and Bahrain. To begin, Tunisia had a very high incidence of the variables determined to be important to the foundation and function of social movements with six of seven of them being present. Also, Egypt a similarly successful case was found to have seven out of seven variables. The cases where social movement was unsuccessful, as judged by the lack of regime change, had a very different rate of prevalence of these variables. Morocco was recorded as having only two of the variables in a full sense,

\textsuperscript{50} Nixon, Ron. “U.S. Groups Helped Nurture Arab Uprisings.”
\textsuperscript{51} Global Democracy Ranking
while achieving some level of the two other variables for a total of three out of seven variables. Likewise, Jordan was found to only have three variables and one partial presence of a variable in its social movement during the Arab Spring with a total score of three and a half out of seven. Lastly, the social movement in Bahrain had an evident presence of only three out of seven variables in its social movement. This amounts to an average of over six variables out of seven for the countries whose social movements achieved regime change, and an average of a little more than three out of seven for those whose movements did not.\textsuperscript{52} I believe these results are significant in illustrating that the strength of social movement in these countries had an impact on their success. Next we will compare the specific variables across all the cases to determine which seem to be most important when determining the success or failure of a social movement.

The importance of each variable to a social movement can be seen by not just its presence in both cases of the successful movements, but also in its absence in the cases of failure. By this measure the most important variables appear to be the breaking off of elite unity from the regime, organizational diffusion from the movement into other established civil society organizations, and possibly the level of democratization of the country prior to protests.\textsuperscript{53} This is because each of these variables were clearly present in both cases of successful protest, and largely absent from at least two if not all three unsuccessful cases. An important caveat to offer for these results is that the choice of case studies could be impaired because of the motivations for each movement. While the autocratic states’ (Egypt and Tunisia) movements certainly wanted to remove their leaders from power, in some of the monarchies it is less clear that this was a goal, as

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\textsuperscript{52} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{53} Ibid.
some hold deep trust and respect for their kings. However, in each case of failure the protests are acknowledged as having not achieved their original goals, and for this reason can still be considered adequate examples. The definition of success as regime change needed to be chosen in order to compare across all cases evenly. In conclusion, it can be surmised that the variables of a broken elite unity, organization diffusion, and prior democratization were the most important for a successful regime change through social movement during the Arab Spring, and partially explains the different results that were found between autocratic regimes and monarchies in that time.

Table 1: Social Movement Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>New Actors</th>
<th>Egypt</th>
<th>Morocco</th>
<th>Jordan</th>
<th>Bahrain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Broken Elite Unity</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local to National Spread</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign Assistance</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilizing Social Media</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization Diffusion</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democratization</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>N/A* (0)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Data unavailable for this country (Preliminary score based on separate score from Freedom House)

Conclusion:

The rise of protest and mobilization across the Middle East that constituted the Arab Spring surprised many international diplomats, journalists, and scholars both because of its suddenness and its success. Out of these protests has risen one major
question, what explains why only regimes of an autocratic nature, such as Tunisia, Libya, or Egypt have seen their leaders overthrown, while those with monarchic governments such as Jordan and Morocco have not? While previous attempts to answer this question have centered on the differences between these two types of governments and how that affects the success of the protest, I believed this question needed to be addressed from the side of the protesters through the lens of social movement theory. I first examined the evolution of social movement theory and informed my analysis through its latest theories on how movements are organized and sustained. Then, I proceeded to examine the cases of two successful, where success is defined as the overthrow of the previous regime, protests in the Arab Spring in the cases of Tunisia and Egypt in order to compare them with the unsuccessful protests in Morocco, Jordan, and Bahrain. As a result of this comparison, three of the seven variables chosen for study are concluded to be important to the success or failure of these protests by being present in the former and largely absent in the latter. These included the end of elite unity with the regime, organizational diffusion of the movement into previously established political, religious, or civil society groups, and the level of democratization achieved in the country prior to the protests. Each of these variables was concluded to improve the strength, and as a result success of, the studied social movements.

The importance of these variables to the success of social movements should be an important lesson for both future scholars studying this exciting time period, and future social movements seeking to replicate it. While the main conclusion of this paper provides a social movement understanding of protest success in the Arab Spring, it is by no means an exhaustive study of the complete role of social movement theory in the Arab
Spring. Instead it represents a start in the study of this event from the social movement perspective, rather than focusing singularly upon the power of the regimes or simple motivation factors for the populace, offering important lessons to be learned about the power of social movement while simultaneously opening up new areas of study and research about the role of social movement theory in the Arab Spring.

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