

Revolutionary Situation and State of Unrest in the Arab World - A Decade After Its Outbreak, Have the “Arab Spring” Ended?

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ABSTRACT

This article comes almost a decade after the outbreak of the Arab Spring events, in order to try and answer the question: Is the Arab Spring really over, or is it simply taking different and new forms and its causes remain in place today? In order to answer this question I will present an explanation of the terms "revolutionary situation" and "revolution", including the need to distinguish between them, where the argument is that the "revolutionary situation" comes one step before the outbreak of the revolution as a set of actual acts of anti-government protests, uprisings, and armed rebellions, is in fact the period that prepares the ground for the revolution. In this article I shall seek to examine the disappearance or existence of the "revolutionary situation". I will present a set of empirical evidence on the existence of the revolutionary state, i.e., the motives of the Arab Spring are still present in Arab societies nearly a decade later, perhaps more strongly today than previously, meaning that the revolutionary state exists and the reasons for the existence of the revolution itself still exist today, as they did a decade ago when the Arab Spring erupted in Tunisia.

INTRODUCTION

In late 2010, the Arab Spring - the largest wave of public protest in modern Arab history - was launched in Tunisia and preceded in succession to Egypt, Libya, Syria, and Yemen. The participants in the protests raised several issues, the most important reflected by the slogan calling to "over throw the regime." These events were to shake up the theoretical and political knowledge about social developments in the Arab world, published and crystallized over the years in several research institutions and centers in the west and in the Arab world itself (see Gause 2011; POMEPS 2012), particularly in regard to what is known as "Arab exceptionalism", i.e. what applies to other societies in terms of the possibility of revolution against authoritarian regimes does not apply to Arabs for reasons related to Islamic religion or Arab customs and social structures (Stepan& Robertson, 2003).

Of course, the revolutions encompassed by the Arab Spring proved that this knowledge was unable to properly understand and monitor the reality of what was happening in the Arab world, which paved the way for research initiatives trying to re-examine social sciences research about the Arab world¹.

After a period featuring the outbreak of such protests, processes of retreat and erosion began, which affected the protests' intensity and nature. In all the countries that participated in the protests, developments took place which led to the decline of what I call in this article the "revolutionary state" and a return to a situation of quiet on one hand –in Tunisia, Egypt, Morocco, and Bahrain - or proceeding to a civil war in other cases –that of Syria, Libya, and Yemen - occasioning speculations that the protests and the revolution calling for democratic change in the countries of the Arab world had reached their conclusion

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¹For an initial list of books, please see: <https://www.goo.dreads.com/shelf/show/arab-spring> (ratified April 2, 2019).

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existence of the revolutionary state, i.e., the motives of the Arab Spring are still present in Arab societies nearly a decade later, perhaps more strongly today than previously, meaning that the revolutionary state exists and the reasons for the existence of the revolution itself still exist today, as they did a decade ago when the Arab Spring erupted in Tunisia.

THE END OF THE "ARAB SPRING?"

Almost one decade after the outbreak of the "Arab Spring" revolutions, many voices are arguing that these revolutions have failed. Some consider these revolutions to have been mere short-term rebellions, others simply unrest caused by external interventions. Below, I shall present three examples of arguments from within and outside the Arab world that indicate one conclusion: the Arab Spring has ended and failed.

Dr. Mohamed Chtatou, a political analyst and professor of education at the University of Rabat, claims: "The so-called "Arab Spring" has definitely gone to the dogs and the Arab world is, unfortunately, moving steadily towards an era of total chaos. One wonders, however, is this the beginning of creative chaos that will lead to better times for the region and its people, or the beginning of something else difficult to guess and, in the end, noxious?"²

Against the background of the successes of Assad's regime in imposing control over the majority of Syrian territory and putting down the revolution that broke out in the spring of 2011 against the Baa'th regime, the Guardian wrote: "At some point in the next year it is likely Assad will be welcomed on to a stage to once again take his place among the Arab world's leaders... Shoulder to shoulder with the Saudi crown prince, Mohammed bin Salman, and Egypt's latest autocrat, General Abdel Fatah al-Sisi, the moment will mark the definitive death of the Arab Spring the hopes of the region's popular revolutions crushed by the newest generation of Middle Eastern strongmen"³.

²Dr. Mohamed Chtatou is a political analyst and professor of education science at the University of Rabat. See his analysis in: <https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/ar/fikraforum/view/why-has-the-arab-spring-become-the-arab-mirage>. (ratified March 31, 2019)

³Bethan McKernan and Martin Chulov. Arab League set to readmit Syria eight years after expulsion. The Guardian, December 28, 2018. See: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/dec/26/arab-league-set>

In line with these conclusions, and evidences indicating the rise of strong leaders in central countries in the region and their activities to overcome the Arab Spring revolutions, a corresponding report refers to the role of foreign powers, especially the United States and the policies of the Obama administration, in eliminating these revolutions:

"The Arab uprisings began in transnational diffusion, ended in transnational repression, and birthed transnational wars.... The death of the Arab Spring had many witnesses, with the United States being the most prominent. Numerous gravediggers buried the Arab Spring — deep economic and social ills, ineffective leaders, weak institutions, extremist groups — but the greatest is regional power politics. Power rivalries played out in every corner of the Arab world, and the stakes were huge"⁴.

This line of analysis is supported by Arab public opinion. According to the Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies that conducted a representative survey in 11 Arab countries between 2014 and 2018, there has been a significant almost double increase in these years, from 17% to 34% of the Arab population, in those who "believe that the Arab Spring has been aborted before the revolutions could achieve their aims, and that the former regimes have returned to power."⁵.

In conclusion, there is a strong belief that the Arab Spring events are over and that the Arab revolutions are behind us and we are in the post-Arab Spring period. In the following article, I will present a different analysis that basically separates the revolution, i.e., direct action in which people are involved in large-scale protests to change the regime and generate a serious shift in the political, social, economic and cultural structures, from what I call the "revolutionary state", i.e., a state of dissatisfaction with the different aspects and existing regime structures, based on the belief that the people deserve a radically different state, which paves the way for a revolutionary state, which needs to be driven by activists and leaders for the actual revolution.

to-readmit-syria-eight-years-after-expulsion (ratified March 31, 2019)

⁴Derek Chollet, 2019. "Who Killed the Arab Spring?" <https://warontherocks.com/2016/06/who-killed-the-arab-spring/>(ratified March 24, 2019)

⁵<http://arabcenterdc.org/survey/2017-2018-arab-opinion-index-executive-summary/> (ratified March 2019)

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In other words, the absence of large-scale protests does not mean that there is a sense of satisfaction with the current regime. It is closer to a state of unease, which I call the "revolutionary state." This stems mainly from the growing discrepancy between what the people / citizens get from the existing political, social, economic, and cultural system, and what they think they deserve. The revolutionary state is stronger the larger the gap between what citizens get and what they think they deserve. This state of affairs was significantly evident in most Arab societies at the outbreak of the Arab Spring revolutions, and it still exists today. The foundations of this condition are supported by empirical evidence. Thus, the state of the Arab Spring as a revolutionary act has ended, but the ongoing revolutionary state still exists as we wait for another new uprising to emerge.

BETWEEN "REVOLUTION" AND "REVOLUTIONARY STATE" AND HOW THIS IS RELEVANT FOR ARAB SOCIETIES

Many scholars and intellectuals have addressed the concept of revolution on the level of its definition and various characteristics, i.e., the different types of revolution and the reasons and impetus for revolutionary action have been well researched. In general, the literature indicates that a revolution is the total destruction of an existing government by those who were subject to it and the establishment of a new administration or a new form of government (Gurr, 1970).

The concept of revolution has various meanings and is a multi-faceted concept that encompasses fears and dangers as well as hopes. For some, this concept represents a great threat to modern civilization, while others regard revolution as the only spark in a World of Darkness (Goldstone, 2001).

Aristotle explained revolutionary phenomena as intense coups characterized by political and constitutional instability (Close & Bridge, 1985). Ellwood (1919) saw the revolution as a sudden act of social change, while Bodin (1955) emphasized the aspect of political change related to the revolution. Then again, Brooks and Ross emphasized the economic elements influenced by revolutionary action (Brooks, 1913; Ross, 1920). Other scholars (Dewe, 1980; Lyford, 1922; Spargo, 1919) argued that revolution as a political phenomenon is only one aspect of the revolutionary act, and that other aspects should be included in the definition of the concept, such as radical changes in religion, economy, and

industry, in addition to a sudden or radical change in beliefs, ideas, and doctrines. Hence, according to his argument, revolution is an act that changes people's fate (Le Bon, 1913: 13) Voltaire defined revolution as overthrowing the old system which failed in all its functions and creating a new system to implement the values of equality and justice (Yoder, 1926: 438).

Arnett emphasizes the modern meaning of the revolution, which is closely related to the idea that the normal history movement begins "suddenly" from a new beginning, and a new historical process that we do not know or talk about is formed (Arendt, 1965: 21). The revolution erupted in order to achieve the freedoms and rights that have been reduced as a result of the long deterioration of governments in the direction of tyranny (Tanter & Midlarsky, 1967).

Sociology offers several explanations for what causes the outbreak of revolutions, or as I call it the "maturation of the revolutionary state". Plato and Aristotle claimed that poverty causes revolutions (Yoder, 1926), but Tocqueville (1955) argued that revolutions occur after a period of significant economic growth, when the elites who ruled over time fail to bring about social, political, and economic prosperity (Tanter & Midlarsky, 1967). On the other hand, Marxism sees the revolution as an inevitable product of the historical factors manifested in the struggle between the social groups of the bourgeoisie and the proletariat (Yoder, 1926). According to the Marxist model, the revolutionary act takes place in the transition from "false consciousness" to "real" and objective consciousness accompanied by many struggles, until the working class, the proletariat, reaches maturity and initiates a revolution.

Deutsch argued that revolutions occur when a group of leading revolutionary activists challenge the system and compete for control of the constitutional system and the political structure (Tanter & Midlarsky, 1967). In other words, they depend on the ability of the rebels to control and change the institutions of government. However, in order for revolutions to change the social structure, the revolutionaries must first replace the ruling elite and assume the role of decision-makers.

According to Tilly, revolutions occur when groups in society gain the necessary leverage to pressure the government or regime for a comprehensive change, while at the same time the regime is unable to make the necessary changes or to suppress these demands (Tilly,

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1977). Davis and his colleagues argued that major revolutions occur after a long period of economic stability and development accompanied by a sharp economic decline before the revolution (in Tanter&Midlarsky, 1967). According to Goldstone, revolutions may occur with a dramatic fall of the order in the city center (Goldstone, 2001).

Huntington argues that if the ruling elites are inclined to reform or replace the regime, this may encourage mass demonstrations in the capital and in major cities, that reduces public support for the government and causing a sudden collapse of the old system (Huntington, 1968). The elites stop supporting the government and work to change it through incitement and mass demonstrations, as well as by expressing their lack of trust in the system of government prior to the revolution.

Skocpol (1979) adopted an inclusive definition of revolution, especially regarding the French, Russian, and Chinese revolutions. According to him, we cannot understand the causes of revolutions only by grasping participants' motives, rather also the internal and external elements involved in generating revolutions must be considered. It is therefore possible that revolutionary states occur due to the masses' suffering not only from internal elements, but from external pressures as a result of war.

According to the psychological approach, people will be ready for a revolution when their expectations and demands rise as a result of an inappropriate response of the system to their expectations. This gap creates revolutionary energy that awaits the leadership and the right direction in which to overthrow the current system (Gurr, 1970). Sorokine's studies are important in this respect. He believes that the reason for revolutions lie in the inability of values to exist in harmony with the surrounding environment and in the incompatibility between values, expectations, and the regime's response. Sorokin identifies six patterns of persecution that can help foment a revolution: suppression of basic needs (hunger); suppression of the instinct of property; suppression of the instinct of self-preservation (life); suppression of the instinct of seeking freedom; suppression of the instinct of self-expression (Sorokin, 1967: 367). As he sees it, the direct cause of the revolution is the suppression of one or more of these instincts.

According to the "growing expectations" model, revolutions occur when there is a sharp decline

following a long period of economic and social prosperity (Davies, 1962). Davies believes that when people are in a bad situation and suffer extreme poverty, they do not tend to initiate a revolution because poverty is far from pushing people to revolution, but it drives them to worry about their safety or the safety of their families or try to cope with the worst case of total despair. In his analysis of the French Revolution, Tocqueville argues that in the period leading up to the Revolution there was an economic crisis that was the focus of the revolutionary movement (Tocqueville, 1966: 195). In other words, what explains the revolutionary state is not poverty but rather the difference between expectations and reality.

In this paper, I argue that the "growing expectations" model should be developed and refined in light of the Arab Spring revolutions. My major hypothesis is that the circumstances of the "revolutionary state" ripen when there is a growing gap between what the people consider that they deserve and what they get from their government - the larger the gap between these two elements, the more the public are willing to initiate a protest culminating in a revolution against the current regime.

In addition the greater the number of people who are aware of the depth of Arab regimes' failure and the severity of their violation of fundamental rights, including the essential issues of freedom of expression and the fundamental right to choose their leadership, the greater the readiness to initiate a revolution. This state of revolution deepened due to the rising awareness among Arab states inhabitants to the citizenship status in established democracies, or even in developing democracies such as Turkey, Indonesia, and Eastern European countries, which led to a significant increase in support for a democratic system that ensures the participation of citizens in Arab societies. The growing gaps led to a ripening of the "revolutionary state" and increased people's willingness to take to the streets as part of a comprehensive process of protest and popular revolution. Empirical studies on the Arab world confirm this conclusion.

Unlike previous years, when interest in examining the mood of the Arab public in political matters was very limited, during the two decades before the outbreak of the Arab Spring, and certainly more so since the Arab Spring, more attention has been attracted to studying political orientations in the Arab world. The most important project

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implemented more than a decade ago is the Arab Democracy barometer, a joint initiative of leading research institutes in the United States and the Arab world⁶. This reading, which includes careful monitoring of changes at various levels and surveys of representative samples, leaves no doubt that people in the Arab world are very concerned about the form of government in Arab countries and want to develop a representative democratic system.

At the same time, Professor Shibley Telhami of the University of Maryland began to conduct public opinion surveys in many Arab countries (see Telhami, 2013). His data from 2004-2011 show that "Arabs want freedom and democracy, they know democracy when they see it, often as Western-style democracies "(Telhami, 2013: 10).

For him, the picture is clear. A significant majority in the Arab world is looking for a democratic system, as shown by a variety of indicators, and there is a high level of support for democratic models, Western and non-Western, while seeking a democratic model that suits the conditions in Arab countries as transitional societies. The yearning for democracy has not diminished over the years, but it has intensified until the last poll in the year that the Arab Spring of 2011 broke out.

The Arab Center for Research and Political Studies in Doha, Qatar, has published a large number of papers on democratization in the Arab world and prospects for transition to democracy (www.dohainstitute.org). The data show high support for promotion of democracy in the Arab world during the years 2011-2018, with very high levels of support and desire for such a system, including recognition of its positive characteristics and a strong rejection of authoritarian regimes (see Arab Index, 2017-2018). When asked about the different components of the democratic system the vast majority of respondents say "despite the limitations of the democratic system, it is still better than other systems" (p. 140).

Finally, the public in the Arab world is aware of the state of democracy in Arab countries. It is believed that the regimes suffer from corruption and do not maintain the foundations of a democratic system that is highly favored by the survey participants when democracy is compared with the existing Arab regimes. The deepening of this gap is the main explanation for the

demand for regime change in the direction of developing democracies in the Arab world, which emerged as a central demand during the Arab Spring. This assessment of the existing situation is not coincidental, and not simply a personal feeling. It is accompanied by fundamental research and objective measures, which indicate that the situation is very bad and has not changed essentially in the eight years since the Arab Spring broke out at the end of 2010, i.e., the "revolutionary state" that led to the outbreak of revolutions and protests still exists –as does the basis for the Arab uprisings.

ONE DECADE LATER - THE ARAB SPRING APPEARS IN SUDAN AND ALGERIA AND RETURNS TODAY IN SYRIA, AND FINALLY TO LEBANON

By the end of 2018 and the beginning of 2019 there were reports of widespread protests in three Arab countries: Sudan, Algeria, and Syria, specifically Dar'aa, where the Syrian revolution against the Ba'ath regime began eight years ago. When comparing this wave with what happened about a decade ago, it is easy to find similarities in terms of form and content, confirming that the Arab Spring has not ended but rather is taking other forms and appearing in other places where the systems or external interventions were unable to wear down the protestors, as happened in the primary countries where the events of the Arab Spring erupted a decade ago (For more details see: Dunne, 2020).

In Sudan, in the second half of December 2018, protests broke out in major cities and in the capital Khartoum in particular. These protests began on an economic basis and reflected popular resentment against the cost of living, but soon turned into protests against the rule of President Omar Hassan al-Bashir⁷. A recent article on the protests, written by Khartoum University law professor Nasr Eddin Abdel Bari, remarks that there is no indication that the wave of protests in Sudan will stop, noting that these protests are the longest and strongest in the post-colonial period and saying that they stunned the government and the opposition. Despite historical and ethnic divisions in Sudan, the protesters and their leaders are of the new millennium generation who appear to have decided to rise above the regional and ethnic

⁶See <http://www.arabbarometer.org/topics/governance/>

⁷<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/12/24/world/africa/sudan-protests.html?module=inline> (ratified March 29, 2019)

divisions of their society. More than 60% of Sudan's population is under the age of 25 and about 20% are between 15 and 24 years of age⁸.

In recent years, a strong opposition movement has emerged on social network sites. The regime was comfortable with this, as a respite that reduces the risk of youth explosions on the streets, but like the Arab Spring, the virtual revolutionary wave turned into action on the ground. As in Tunisia, when the protests were led by labor unions, the protestors in Sudan turned to the use of social media, similar to what happened eight years ago in the countries where the Arab Spring broke out. "The strength of the Arab Spring revolutions lies in its ability to employ social media in revolutionary action and to create horizontal leadership that is difficult for the authorities to pursue and arrest, as they do with traditional opposition, something that benefited the young people in Sudan"⁹. On the other hand Bashir, like Ben Ali in Tunisia, Mubarak in Egypt, Qaddafi in Libya, Assad in Syria, and Saleh in Yemen, accused the protesters of being agents of foreign powers while also urging them to wait until the general elections in 2020, but the protesters refused to accept this proposal¹⁰. The ruling National Congress and the political opposition formed by about 22 political entities agreed to engage in national dialogue to reach understandings with the Sudanese government in exchange for expanding political participation¹¹. Then again, the continued confrontations led to intervention by the army, the resign of al-Bashir, and his detention, but this did not prevent the demonstrations from further trying to topple the regime¹².

Another country that did not become involved in the Arab Spring a decade ago is Algeria, but it is now in the Arab Spring stage. There is widespread protest in Algerian cities, especially Algiers the capital, demanding to "topple the regime." The protests broke out at the end of February 2019, in a clear call to prevent President Abdelaziz Bouteflika from participating in the presidential

elections scheduled for April 2019. Bouteflika was first appointed president in 1999 as a representative of the ruling National Liberation Front. When he took office he promised to run for only two terms, but he was elected four times, most recently in 2014. Bouteflika did not appear in public since 2013 because of a stroke that left him in a wheelchair¹³.

Similar to the protesters in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Syria, and Yemen in 2011, the Algerian rebels set a date for their demonstrations, on a Friday. Accordingly, from Friday, February 22, 2019 until the present (March 29, 2019), tens of thousands of protesters have participated in the protests. This has led to the dismantling of the support front for Bouteflika and public opinion has gradually moved to stand with the protesters¹⁴, while considering that "the legitimacy of the ruling regime may have begun to erode from the inside. Twelve regional governors –out of seventy-two-, announced their support for the demands of the popular movement and called upon the ruling party to support the demands by the protesters. Retired army officers announced their support for the demands of the protesters during the marches last Sunday. In another dramatic development, Moaz Bouchareb, secretary-general of the National Liberation Front and the speaker of parliament, who announced President Abdelaziz Bouteflika's candidacy for the elections a month ago, declared his party support for the demands of the popular movement for political change. Also, the former Prime Minister and leader of the National Democratic Front, Ahmed Ouyahia, called upon the government to immediately respond to the demands of the protesters¹⁵.

The continuing protest actions led to the announcement by the Chief of Staff of the Algerian army, Ahmed Kayed Saleh, to resort to Article 102 of the Constitution regarding the vacant position of President of the Republic¹⁶. Article 102 states that "if the President of the Republic is unable to exercise his functions due to a serious and chronic illness, the Constitutional Council shall meet and decide, after ascertaining the truth of this impediment by all appropriate

⁸<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/01/29/opinion/sudan-protests-bashir.html> (ratified March 29, 2019)

⁹<https://www.aljazeera.net/news/politics/2019/1/31> (ratified March 29, 2019)

¹⁰<http://www.bbc.com/arabic/middleeast-46935755> (ratified March 29, 2019)

¹¹<http://studies.aljazeera.net/ar/positionestimate/2019/02/190205122533437.html> (ratified April 1, 2019)

¹²<https://arabicpost.net/انقلاب- /04/2019/تحليلات-شارحة> في-السودان (ratified April 14, 2019)

¹³<http://www.bbc.com/arabic/middleeast-47573884> (ratified March 29, 2019)

¹⁴<http://www.bbc.com/arabic/middleeast-47751145> (ratified March 29, 2019)

¹⁵<http://www.bbc.com/arabic/interactivity-47661704> (ratified March 29, 2019)

¹⁶<http://www.bbc.com/arabic/middleeast-47755705> (ratified March 29, 2019)

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means" This announcement was rejected by the leaders of the protesters and the opposition, and they considered it a deviation from their demands to "overthrow the regime," meaning a radical change in the government and its policies¹⁷. "The scope of mobility has widened and the ceiling of its demands has risen since February 22," said Louisa IattHammadouche, a professor at the University of Algiers. "The presidency mandate is not the main requirement, but the demand for a radical change of regime has increased."¹⁸In early April 2019 Bouteflika announced his intention to step down from the presidency, complying with some of the protesters' demands¹⁹, but the protests did not stop rather they are still in a state of escalation, aiming to affect the status quo in the period after Bouteflika.

Even after the presidential elections in December 13, 2019, the protesters continued to demand that the regime be overthrown. The newly elected president is Abdelmadjid Tebboune, a former prime minister, who won the presidential vote. But the masses in the streets refused to calm down and Tebboune was accused of being a front for the military-backed elites who have ruled Algeria since independence from France in 1962. The protesters accused the generals of mismanaging the country for decades, and vowed to continue fighting until a true democratic transformation is achieved²⁰.

The most significant protests were those that broke out in Dar'aa, Syria, the same city where the Syrian revolution against the Baath regime began in 2011. "Hundreds of Syrians protested in the city of Dar'aa on Sunday to remove a new statue of former President Hafez al-Assad, the father of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, nearly eight years after the original statue was taken down at the start of the Syrian civil war. The residents took to the streets of the war-torn old quarter of the city, calling for Assad to be overthrown days before the eighth anniversary of the start of the conflict"²¹. Syrian opposition

¹⁷<http://www.bbc.com/arabic/middleeast-47755705> (ratified March 29, 2019)

¹⁸<http://studies.aljazeera.net/ar/reports/2019/03/190319080407233.html> (ratified April 1, 2009)

¹⁹<http://www.bbc.com/arabic/middleeast-47795083> (ratified April 3, 2019)

²⁰<https://www.ft.com/content/b82a10e8-1dc0-11ea-97df-cc63de1d73f4> (ratified December 17, 2019)

²¹<https://arabic.euronews.com/2019/03/11/new-assad-statue-triggers-protest-in-cradle-of-syrian-revolt> (ratified March 29, 2019)

leader Nasr Hariri declared that "after years of suffering, killing, displacement and destruction, the spring of Syria is blossoming again,"²² indicating a direct correlation with the events of the Arab Spring that began in Syria in March 2011 and were launched in Dar'aa itself.

In Lebanon, which also did not take an active part in the Arab Spring events a decade earlier, mass protests against the government erupted in late October 2019, following government decisions to impose various taxes, including for use of WhatsApp. The protests concentrated in Beirut but spread to other Lebanese cities as well. These were attended by protesters from all streams and communities in Lebanon. Basically, the forces opposing Hezbollah strongly supported the demonstrations, and Hezbollah and its allies resisted and tried to intervene to stop the protests. According to Foreign Policy journal the last wave of protests is "becoming the most comprehensive anti-government protests the country has seen at least since the civil war ended in 1990, in terms of numbers, geographic spread, and diversity of sect and class. The demonstrations brought hundreds of thousands of Lebanese to the streets, paralyzing the country's transportation and banking system and, on Oct. 29, forcing the resignation of Prime Minister Saad Hariri".²³

So far the protests have caused significant political changes, including Hariri's resignation from the office of prime minister. The president is in a precarious position, and it is clear that the protests have seriously affected his functioning and his legitimacy, as much of the anger has been and is still being directed at him²⁴. Until the present moment the cause of the crisis, which appears to be the most severe civil crisis in Lebanon since the end of the civil war in the mid-1980s, remains unclear. The protesters are utilizing slogans that promoted and demanded the Arab Spring and were part of the hostilities that broke out in some Arab countries a decade ago.

The recent cases in Sudan, Algeria, Lebanon, and Syria clearly indicate that the content and form of these demonstrations are an extension of the Arab Spring demonstrations a decade ago,

²²<https://www.aljazeera.net/news/politics/2019/3/11> (ratified March 29, 2019)

²³See: <https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/11/02/lebanon-protesters-movement-streets-explainer/> (ratified in December 17, 2019)

²⁴See:<http://www.bbc.com/arabic/middleeast-50431787> (ratified December 17, 2019)

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and thus we have testimonies from the field that the Arab Spring is not over and that we will be witnessing frequent evidences that the revolutionary state that existed before the Arab Spring protests are still here, throughout the Arab world.

"NATIONAL IDENTITY" AND ITS ASSOCIATION WITH THE "REVOLUTIONARY STATE" IN THE ARAB WORLD

Unlike riots, which generally occur in marginalized groups—among minorities, lower classes, and immigrants - revolutions take place in the center, in the big cities, especially the capital and major cities. If they begin in secondary cities, they rapidly move to central cities. Revolutions usually enjoy broad popular support, reflecting a coherent state of "national identity", a state of consensus that is formed in a variety of contexts.

In modern societies, national identity is formed in four contexts. The first is the crystallization of national consciousness, the second is the formation of the modern state and the emergence and development of the idea of citizenship as a collective and individual act, the third is a coherent society as an expression of the formation of national identity and citizenship identity, and the fourth is the building of the modern state structure with its bureaucracy, as upholding citizens' interests and as their representative in internal and external agendas.

National identity is essential for the functioning and performance of the state. State officials must be loyal to the broad public interest represented, rather than to the narrow interests of a certain region, ethnic group, tribe, family, or other group of affiliation. Countries with strong modern bureaucratic traditions have strong national identities. These countries have succeeded in developing an adequate bureaucratic system with a strong and cohesive national identity. National identity is based on common elements such as traditions, symbols, shared historical memory, and a common culture. One form of national identity is that political boundaries must be commensurate with cultural boundaries, where culture is largely determined by language and sometimes by ethnicity. But it can also be based on religion, or on a set of political principles such as democracy and constitutional rule (Fukuyama, 2014).

National identity is the social product of a popular-collective effort of several forces - politicians, intellectuals, clergy, writers, journalists,

poets, philosophers, musicians, etc. But it is also the product of a state that defines its official "national language", defines its borders and people, pursues an educational policy that determines the history to be studied and what its citizens will learn, a process that leads the country on all levels towards the formation of national identity. It predicts a shift towards democracy or alternately towards an internal conflict and fragmentation - as happened in Syria, Iraq, and Libya (Fukuyama, 2014; Gellner, 2006).

According to Fukuyama (2014), there are four political paths to the formation of national identity: (1) definition of political boundaries in a way that accommodates the population; (2) "relocation" of the population in accordance with geographical boundaries; (3) adaptation of a transformative nature to the national identity; and (4) adopting democratic and pluralistic policies that accommodate differences and pave the way to a national identity. Democracy itself can be the basis of the national identity, and democracy and national identity can reinforce each other.

The implications of the four contexts can be summed up as forming a national identity that contains 14 main manifestations:

- A compromise between national groups and the emergence of citizenship and citizens as constituent vehicles, including the fundamental right to vote and to be elected.
- The existence of a People – the "Demos" and the right of self-determination for all the people, rather than for only some of the people.
- A distinction between ethnic and primordial identities and the status of fundamental rights - the status of the person is determined by citizenship and by birth group.
- The individuals and citizens are the material and moral basis of national unity and the central unit that forms the country, rather than the family / tribe / religious group - the state is not the sum of all groups and clans, as in the Middle Ages or previously.
- The source of sovereignty is not God and not the prince / king but the people, which determines the general desire for self determination and is the source of legislation that sets the rules through Parliament or elected government.
- Clear geographical boundaries.
- The stability of the political entity and support of its existence by its inhabitants.

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- A cohesive civic identity and effective community expression - community organization, organizational capacity for all citizens to express their will beyond voting.
- Separation of public property from the Governor's property.
- A tax-based economic structure vis-à-vis the **rentier**-state system.
- Compulsory military service.
- Modern institutions: A council with an effective parliament, parties, constitution, or basic laws.
- The existence of institutions and mechanisms to deal with phenomena that are detrimental to the public order, such as maintaining public order, enforcing law enforcement, fighting corruption, etc.
- Clear arrangements for legislation, regulations, and administrative procedures

The modern state relies on a number of basic principles, since the existence of one element in the state does not rule out other elements, and vice versa. In fact, the Arab state developed in a distorted manner, unlike the modern state on all dimensions mentioned above. This distortion was the most important cause of the revolutionary state that developed in the Arab world and led to the events of the Arab Spring in the past decade, especially if we compare it with the expectations of the people and their views regarding the political and civil system they are seeking, and all present this below.

The analysis in the next paragraph will be carried out based on examining the existence of the basic principles of the modern state in the Arab world, i.e., the disparity between the basic components of the modern state and the current Arab states. This disparity is the source of the unrest and state of protest that has swept through Arab countries since 2010, meaning that the difference between what exists and what people aspire to is the basis for the tension and the source of popular protests in the Arab world, as well of the public's desire to move towards a modern state that is compatible with the principles presented earlier.

The intention is to illustrate the level of deviation in the modern Arab state from the founding principles of the modern state and thus reveal the disparity that constitutes a source of tension between the state and society in the Arab world in three major domains: separation between the ruler and his position; the existence

of a protected public sphere; and the level of cohesion between the state and citizens' identity.

Separation\Non-Separation between the Ruler and the Ruling Position

The essence of the principle is that in a modern state there must be a mechanism that allows for an exchange of power in the ranks that hold the central power of the state, unlike the ancient world and medieval ages when the ruler was separated from his post only upon his death or through a violent coup. In addition, changes of government cannot be dominated internally by a family or a certain stratum in the population alone. The accepted way of ensuring differentiation is by implementing a mechanism of democratic and open elections for a defined period of time. This ensures that every citizen has the ability to influence who is the leader of the state and the possibility of attaining the senior position himself.

In most Arab countries, there was previously no tradition of elections to government institutions, but almost all of them began implementing this mechanism - at least ostensibly - in the late 1990s, and with a great deal of momentum in the early 2000s. The process was accelerated, inter alia, by external pressures or by the need to extricate themselves from the plight of lack of legitimacy, in light of the US "vision of democratization in the Middle East" led by George W. Bush after the September 11 attacks (Telhami, 2013).

At present, as in the year in which the Arab spring broke out, most Arab countries hold elections, but there is a basic difference between monarchies in which the king is the supreme authority and the elections are for positions of lesser influence, and democratic countries that hold elections for the highest executive level. Despite the limitations on the effectiveness of the elections, it is impossible to ignore the fact that the very existence of elections constitutes at least the first stage in the transition from an authoritarian / monarchic regime to a "hybrid" regime.

Arab countries can be divided into five groups based on two main categories and subcategories. The two super categories are monarchic vs. republic:

Monarchy - In a country with a monarchy, there is a built-in connection between the controlling person and the position, and the basic situation is that the position is blocked to most of the state's citizens. At the same time, there is an important division between monarchies that do

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not hold any elections and that do. Monarchies that do not hold elections represent the most extreme model of total power concentration by a tiny elite at the expense of a complete lack of access to power for the majority of the population. Monarchies that hold elections for authoritative positions represent a model of a "hybrid" government, where the role of the ruler is reserved for a specific group, but the rest of the citizens have access to and the ability to integrate into government institutions.

Republic - Unlike monarchies, in these countries there is no a priori restriction that guarantees the governing position to a specific person or group. This is manifested in the fact that elections in these

countries may be not only for the legislature but also for the position of ruler. However, as shown in the table1, in most of these countries the elections are merely superficial, and in the overwhelming majority of cases the same leader is victorious time and again. Winning by such a large margin is impossible in free elections. The left column in the table shows the Arab countries that have real open elections. According to the data, there are four countries that have a relatively free election, including the Palestinian Authority, which is not yet a state and Iraq since 2003, that still under construction, so their ability to maintain and consolidate such a democratic mechanism remains to be proven.

Table1. Elections in Republics vs Monarchies

Monarchy		Republic		
No Elections	With Elections	No Elections	Deceptive Elections*	Free Elections
Saudi Arabia Qatar United Arab Emirates**	Jordan Morocco Bahrain Kuwait	Libya under Qaddafi Syria under the Assad family***	Tunisia until the Arab spring (99% Bin-Ali) Yemen under Abdullah Saleh (2014) Algeria (over 90% support for the president) Egypt - until 2012 and after Sisi's coup against President-elect Morsi in July 2013 (88% for Mubarak)	Tunisia after the Arab Spring in 2011 Iraq after Saddam The Palestinian Authority Lebanon In Egypt in 2012, which voted in Muhammad Morsi as president

**The United Arab Emirates is a federation composed of seven emirates, each headed by an prince. The seven emirates appoint a joint president for a period of five years. Hence, there is a mechanism of change of government, but it is limited to a specific group, both in terms of voters and of those elected.

***The state in Syria is a little less extreme than in Libya, because every five years there is an official referendum to approve an additional term for the president, and there are also parliamentary elections, albeit under heavy supervision and government intervention.

In sum and similar to a decade ago, the vast majority of Arab states - excluding Lebanon, Iraq, and Tunisia - still do not have a genuine democratic mechanism that allows for a change of government according to the people's decision. At the same time, it is important to distinguish between the countries in the extreme group (Saudi Arabia, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, and Syria), which completely reject elections, and in the moderate group (Jordan, Morocco, Bahrain, Kuwait, Egypt), where the ruler does not stand for real elections, but on lower levels the model is that of a political system in which there is room for competing streams, including an opposition.

This situation has worsened in recent decades in light of the intensifying processes of democratization in Eastern Europe and South America, which have been accompanied by extensive publicity, even in the Arab world. Arab citizens are more aware of free and democratic elections and of the possibilities granted to citizens in various parts

of the world to influence the form of regime and who controls it, although lacking the same opportunities. The debates in the Arab media, especially the popular television networks, and questions about the rights enjoyed by hundreds of millions of people, some of whom joined this circle only after the fall of the totalitarian regimes in Eastern Europe and South America, while not granted to the Arab public, are only exacerbating the tensions on the public level.

As in the current Arab Spring, most Arab countries do not have a system of separation between the ruler and his position, and even when it does exist it is mainly superficial. The domination by a single person at the head of the system in most countries leads to the fact that the image and policy of the state are shaped by the ruler's image and his worldview. Therefore, his departure from power could also lead to significant shock..

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The second model can be found in Arab monarchies. Since the regime is defined as such, the transfer of power in a succession is perceived as more legitimate. An example is Saudi Arabia, where the royal tradition is that the regime was inherited by one brother from another inside the Saudi family until the current king, Salman bin Abd al-Aziz. In Jordan it is customary to view the Hashemite royal family as one from which the government is transferred from father to son. The transfer of power from King Hussein to his son Abdullah was seen as a natural move that did not cause any public unrest. Similar stability accompanied Mohammed VI's entry into the shoes of his father as King of Morocco.

In countries where the change of power took place after years of aggressive control, the exchanges proved far more dramatic and critical to the image of the state. Hafez al-Asad, who led the coup in Syria and served as president for 29 years, died in June 2000 and was replaced by his son, the inexperienced Bashar. Then doubts began to emerge as to whether Bashar actually managed to be able to inherit his father and to what extent he was capable of leading significant moves both on the domestic level and in the field of foreign relations.

Saddam Hussein was ousted by the United States by force after 24 years of rule. Hussein headed the Ba'ath Party that had ruled Iraq since 1968. The American forces did not stop with his personal deposition, but crushed all the party's control mechanisms to ensure the creation of a government vacuum as a first step towards building Iraq in the post-Saddam era. A decade and a half after ousting Saddam, American forces remain on Iraqi soil and the ability to stabilize a true local government in Iraq is still a major obstacle because the ousting of the ruler was carried out by external force and direct intervention, and therefore it is more difficult to predict in what way the internal forces will eventually overcome the chaos created.

Arafat, who headed the Palestinian Authority and led the Palestinian people for 35 years, passed away in November 2004. Despite the fact that the Palestinian Authority is not yet a state, the appointment of Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen) as his successor was much more open and democratic than in many other Arab cases. Abu Mazen won the elections with a 75% majority. He presented a more moderate political line regarding the political settlement with Israel than did Arafat and has invested far more significant resources in laying

the foundations for an independent future state. On the other hand, it is possible that his inferior status compared to that of Arafat is what enabled Hamas to challenge the supremacy of Fatah, which eventually led to a split in the Palestinian Authority (see Ghanem, 2009).

In 2005 at the age of 77, after 23 years of rule, Mubarak agreed to a constitutional amendment allowing presidential elections that would permit more than one candidate to run. Mubarak's compromise came after a prolonged state of resentment by the opposition forces, which grew due to the concern that Mubarak, an aging man, would soon bequeath power to his son. This reform was received with skepticism. The critics argued that as long as the term of the presidency is not limited, there is little value to the amendment. The prevailing assumption was that Mubarak would serve one more term and then his son would be trained to inherit him. In 2011, Mubarak was ousted from office by a popular uprising and put on trial.

In Libya too, speculations began about the day after Qaddafi, even before the wave of protest in 2011. It was estimated that after 40 years of rule he would also try to pass on the position to his son. More than any other ruler, Qaddafi's successor seemed to be the most critical for the country. Libya represents one of the most extreme forms of anti-modern and undemocratic political systems. Qaddafi's regime has dominated for more than four decades; the length of his rule and the total neutralization of all possible control mechanisms (constitution, elections, political organizations, Islamic religious leaders, etc.) have shaped Libya completely in the image of Gadhafi and his worldview. During his reign, he managed to change from a leader who opposed the West to a pragmatic and moderate leader in the field of foreign policy. Gadhafi's absolute dominance and long years of rule led to a direct connection between his personal status and Libya's status and conduct in the international arena over the course of four decades.

These characteristics seem to be true of Nasser, Saddam Hussein, Assad, Qaddafi, and to a lesser extent but still relevant also Arafat and Mubarak. This reflects another significant difference between many Arab countries and the model of the modern state where, except for the supreme ruler, the government and its branches wield no power and have no real influence on the decision-making process, which encourages unbalanced

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decision making and the central place of personal and family interests.

The Existence / Non-Existence of a Protected Public Sphere

The public sphere is the space where non-governmental actors can debate, criticize, and share insights and interpretations about the world, the state, and their meanings. Such a sphere can exist among all citizens, but equally to a smaller extent within specific groups of citizens. The existence of a protected public sphere in the sense of being able to manage it freely and without intervention is a vital condition for the establishment of a modern state. Such a sphere can be managed in a number of ways: free and open communication, an active civil society and, to some extent, opposition parties' ability to act freely and to fulfill their designated role.

The media is an important arena for open political public discussion as part of the existence of this "protected space", and the ability of the media to serve as a "watchdog" of the government authorities is a cornerstone of the development of a modern state. The role of the media has become so significant that researchers have designated it a "Fourth Authority", meaning that its role in the system of checks and balances is close to that of the three central and recognized authorities.

The ability of the media to act freely and impartially vis-à-vis the state authorities does not exist in the same manner in all countries and in all types of regimes. Freedom House's annual report gives 195 countries a score that assesses the extent of media freedom in the country, according to the index compiled by the organization, where a score of 0 indicates optimal freedom and 100 indicates absolute absence of freedom. The report defines three measures that can harm freedom of the press.

First, legal restrictions - legal restrictions of freedom of expression, restriction of the independence of the judiciary and of public broadcasting organizations. Second, political restrictions - the independence of the editors of public and private newspapers, the degree of state and media censorship of the media, access to information and resources, the ability of local and foreign journalists to cover events without interference, intimidation of journalists by the threat of arrest. Third, economic constraints - the structure of ownership of the media, the degree of concentration in the market, the cost of maintaining means of communication and

dissemination of information by these means, the imposition of economic sanctions on specific media, influencing content through corruption and bribery.

Each type of restriction is assessed on the basis of a large number of sub-criteria. Every country is awarded a score for each type of restriction. The weighting of the three grades generates the final score. Final grades are divided into 3 categories:

- 0-30: Full freedom of the press
- 31-70: Partial press freedom
- 71-100: No press freedom.

None of the Arab countries was found to be in the high category that points to existence of full freedom of the press. When comparing the situation in 2008²⁵ and 2017²⁶, in most Arab countries a decline was found in the freedom of the press index - only Tunisia and Libya showed a rise. About half the countries meet the definition of "partial freedom", but note that all grades tend towards the lower score for this category.

Table2. *Free of Press in the Arab States, 2008 vs. 2017*

Partial freedom of the press (31-70), the number is the 2008 State score compared to 2017	There is no freedom (71-100) the number is the State score, 2008 vs. 2017
Kuwait - 54 (2008) ... 60 (2017)	Bahrain - 71 (2008) ... 87 (2017)
Lebanon - 55....56	Yemen - 78....85
Egypt 59....77	Saudi Arabia - 81....86
Algeria - 62...65	Tunisia - 54.... 81
Jordan - 63....68	Syria - 83....90
Morocco - 64 ... 66	The Palestinian Authority - 84 ... 84
Qatar - 64....70	Libya - 94 ... 77
United Arab Emirates 68...78	
Iraq - 69...71	

In a detailed analysis of the nature of restrictions imposed on media coverage in each of the Arab countries, which limits the restrictions on "legal" "political" and "economic" it is evident that almost all countries, except Morocco and the United Arab Emirates, tend to bar the freedom of decision making and action by newspaper editors, intimidating journalists and restricting their access to information.²⁷

²⁵http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=350&ana_page=348&year=2008

²⁶<https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-press/freedom-press-2017> (ratified March 31 2019)

²⁷<https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-press/freedom-press-2017> (ratified March 31, 2019)

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As for the activity of the opposition parties, before the outbreak of the Arab Spring and today as well (2019), in many Arab countries there are no

elections for the post of head of the executive branch and in others elections are only superficial and do not allow true political competition.

Table3. Elections to the position of the head of executive branch

Monarchies		Republics		
No Elections	Elections	No Elections	Quasi Elections	Free Elections
Saudi Arabia Qatar United Arab Emirates	Jordan Morocco Bahrain Kuwait	Libya under Qaddafi Syria	Tunisia until 2011 (99% for Bin-Ali) Algeria (over 90% for president) Egypt until 2012 (88% for Mubarak)	Iraq (supervised by the US occupation) Yemen - in 2013 (77.2% for Salih) Palestinian Authority Lebanon

However, even in the absence of a genuine democratic process for electing the leader of a state, the existence / non-existence of opposition parties whose activities are recognized as legitimate by the government is of great importance. In the absence of genuine political competition for the leadership of the state, this activity becomes part of the "protected sphere" of political activity and discussion that is not subject to the government. An analysis of the situation shows that there is a very

high correlation between the degree of freedom in elections for leadership of a state and the degree of freedom accorded to the activity of opposition parties. Most states that do not hold elections for the executive branch do not allow freedom of action for the opposition parties, but the same can be found on the other extreme, when countries that hold elections open to the executive also allow open elections and freer party activity.

Table4. Freedom of political activity for opposition parties²⁸

Activity is prohibited	Limited activity under severe restrictions	Freedom of activity with certain limitations	Free Activism
Saudi Arabia***** Qatar United Arab Emirates***** Libya Under Qaddafi	Syria Algeria	Bahrain Kuwait Egypt Jordan Tunisia under Ben Ali	Iraq Tunisia after 2011 Lebanon The Palestinian Authority Yemen Morocco

²⁸See: <http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=22&country=7767&year=2010>

***** In 2005 political elections were held for the first and only time, for local municipalities. Women were forbidden from voting or running. The Shura Council that is appointed by the king fills a considerable part of the roles with which the parliament is charged.

***** In 2005 an initial and very limited process of elections took place, with only 2,000 eligible voters authorized to elect 40 of the federal council members (half).

It should be clarified that of the six countries represented as allowing freedom of action, Iraq is a country that has been in a state of chaos since the fall of Saddam Hussein, so it is necessary to wait and see how the central government will behave once the situation stabilizes. The Palestinian Authority, which is also in this category, is not yet a state, but for the past 24 years has been in an interim situation that is supposed to enable it to become a state in the future.

In the broad area of civil rights, genuine protection of civil rights and freedom is a necessary condition for the ability to maintain that protected public sphere. Freedom House's annual report presents a comprehensive review of the subject, discerning a

category of "civil rights" that focuses more on individual rights than on "political rights" related to the citizen's ability to freely participate in political processes. Note that in this report, the scores were graded contrary to most other samples, with 1 representing the highest level of freedom and 7 the lowest.

Political rights are examined according to three criteria: the propriety of the electoral process, pluralism and political participation, and the functioning of the government.

Civil rights are examined according to four criteria: freedom of expression and belief, the right to organize and act, the supremacy of the rule of law, the degree of protection of individual rights.

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As in 2010 and even in 2019, in all categories no Arab country was able to obtain a score of 1 or 2 for characteristics of a modern state with a high degree of freedom. The significant change that Tunisia has undergone since the revolution

against Ben Ali's regime and Lebanon, which receives a high score in the field of civil rights, is somewhat offset by the low score it enjoys in the category of "political rights." Arab countries can be divided into three categories.

Table5. *Violation of Civil Rights in Arab States*

Partial violation of civil rights	Significant violation of civil rights	Comprehensive violation of civil rights
Lebanon Tunisia after 2011 Kuwait Morocco	Iraq Algeria Bahrain Egypt Jordan United Arab Emirates Yemen Libya after 2011	The Palestinian Authority Tunisia under Ben Ali Saudi Arabia Syria Libya under Qaddafi

Qaddafi's Libya, Syria, and Saudi Arabia stand out (according to this ranking, as in most other cases) as countries that most severely violate civil rights. It is interesting to note that in most of the other domains Jordan is identified as a

relatively developed country, but in this case it has similar rankings to those of Egypt, Yemen, and Algeria, and is defined as a country where there is a significant infringement of civil rights. In table 6, are details of the findings.

Table6. *Level of Violation of Civil & Political Rights in the Arab States*

Conclusion	Political rights	Political rights	Civil rights	Civil rights	
	2010	2019	2010	2019	
Partial freedom / deterioration	5	4	3	5	Lebanon
Partial freedom / deterioration	4	5	4	5	Kuwait
Partial freedom / deterioration	5	5	4	5	Morocco
No freedom	5	5	6	6	Iraq
No freedom	6	5	5	5	Qatar
No freedom	6	6	5	5	Algeria
No freedom / deterioration	6	7	5	6	Bahrain
No freedom / deterioration	6	6	5	6	Egypt
No freedom / slight improvement	6	5	5	5	Jordan
No freedom / deterioration	6	7	5	6	United Arab Emirates
No freedom / deterioration	6	7	5	6	Yemen
No freedom / deterioration	6	7	6	5	The Palestinian Authority
No significant freedom / improvement	7	2	5	3	Tunisia
No freedom	7	7	6	7	Saudi Arabia
No freedom / deterioration	7	7	6	7	Syria
No freedom / slight improvement	7	7	7	6	Libya

Hybrid Identities in the Arab World - The Lack of a Comprehensive Identity

Historians agree that one of the main reasons for instability in Europe between the two world wars is the arbitrary and unnatural division in which the borders of the new and veteran states were determined at the end of the First World War, a division that crossed nationalities and cultures in certain places and mixed them under one border elsewhere. The physical boundaries that were determined did not fit the social

boundaries. A social boundary is an abstract concept that distinguishes between a member of a collective and someone who is not. The criteria for determining such a border are varied: religion, nationality, race, status, and more.

Most of the Arab states gained independence after World War II (at the latest in the early 1960s) with the end of colonialism by the European powers. It is evident that in almost all countries there are schisms between the local national identity and the pan Arab and pan

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Islamic identities that cross borders, influenced mainly by the Shiite-Islamic revolution in Iran and the Sunni Muslim Brotherhood movement. In the context of this paper, the two remarkable influences are those that cross the borders of Islamic identity and Arab identity, which make it difficult to form a local state identity as part of building a modern state.

While in the first decades Arab identity was the dominant factor that undermined national identity, in recent decades the wheel appears to have reversed and as this identity has weakened, the influence of Islamic identity has been significantly strengthened by the Iranian Revolutionary among Shiites and by the Muslim Brotherhood movement among the Sunnis.

The concept of nationality refers to a sense of mutual loyalty, a connection to a particular territory, a historical tradition and a sense of identity and destiny. A nation-state is based on the assumption that there is uniformity between the physical boundary and the social boundary, defined in this case according to the principle of nationalism. Most Arab countries find it difficult to formulate a unique national identity because of the historical and contemporary mix of this identity with national and religious identities that cross borders. One of the few countries that can be identified as consistently advancing towards the formation of a local identity is Egypt.

In Jordan the PLO, which saw itself as the representative of the Palestinians, undermined Jordan's internal stability and was expelled from Lebanon. In contrast, Jordan's formal disengagement from the West Bank in 1988, represented a historic concession by Jordan of the West Bank territory it held until 1967 and recognition of the Jordan River as a border with Israel. In 1994, Jordan became the second Arab state to sign a peace agreement and put an end to the conflict with Israel, thus separating itself from the accepted pan-Arab line, which views Israel as an eternal enemy, a concept still accepted by most Arab states. These steps, backed by King Abdullah's pro-Western policy, reinforce Jordan's national identity, which sees itself first and foremost as an independent state and not as part of a religious or nationalist-Arab stream of other countries.

Regarding Arab identity, the period prior to the 1967 war was known as the pan-Arab era, in the spirit of the Ba'th Party and under the leadership of Nasser. This ideology is based on a socialist and Arab nationalist outlook that espouses the

vision of a large Arab nation. Most of the Arab states were at that time young states liberated from European colonialism only a decade or so earlier. The dominant perception of Arab nationalism was promoted at the time by most countries to form a unique national identity.

The 1967 war created a strong shock in this perception. The defeat of the Arab coalition led by Egypt, the loss of significant territory of Jordan, Syria, and Egypt in favor of Israel, as well as the transfer of holy places to Christianity and Islam to Israeli control, constituted a severe blow to the pan-Arab outlook. In the three years after the war a military coup took place in Syria, Iraq, Algeria, and Sudan. The peace treaty between Israel and Egypt in 1978 led to the removal of Egypt, previously the dominant state in the Arab world, from the Arab League. The disintegration of the pan-Arab front gave way to the formation of a local national identity among Arab states. One of the most significant Arab leaders who believed in the pan-Arab vision was Saddam Hussein, but he was unable to impose his vision on other Arab countries. Since his defeat in the first Gulf War, his status and ability to influence diminished and he was pushed into an isolated position within the Arab world as well. In Lebanon, which in some of the categories examined in this chapter is one of the more modernized countries, a prolonged internal civil war began in 1975, one of the results of which was a significant increase in Syrian involvement in Lebanon's ability to form an independent identity. Today, the state is divided between the so-called pro-Syrian camp and the "Cedars Coalition," comprised of opponents of the Syrian influence, in addition to and the powerful influence of Iran, whose goals clash with Lebanon's objectives. In sum, a situation that enhances the lack of stability and internal cohesion.

With regard to religious identity, the Iranian revolution raised in all countries fears of a wave of identification with the significant Shiite population: Iraq, Kuwait, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Syria, and Lebanon. There is no doubt that the most significant and destabilizing influence of this population is felt in Lebanon through Hezbollah, which was founded with the support of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards and whose vision was to empower the Shiites in Lebanon, to fight Israel, and to Islamize the public sphere. At the same time, the threat of influence and expansion is relevant for all Arab countries with a significant Shiite population. Although the organization participates in the political game in Lebanon, its members are the only armed militia

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and have taken military steps without coordination or consideration of the Lebanese government's position. Another country that could be undermined by Iranian involvement is Iraq, which has a large Shiite population. After the fall of Saddam Hussein and the departure of the US military, there is concern that increased Iranian involvement is expected to make it difficult to form a stable state with an independent local identity.

A less powerful factor than the Iranian Revolutionary Guards, but still very important, is the Muslim Brotherhood. This movement, which was founded in Egypt even before Egypt gained independence, represents a Sunni Islamic stream. The movement gained a foothold in various Arab countries and operates in Syria, Jordan, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Palestine (see Ghanem & Mustafa, 2014).

In conclusion, the absence of a national identity in most Arab countries is another obstacle to the transition to modern behavior. This situation encourages the intervention of strong states in the conduct of other countries and exposes weak states to external influences.

DISCUSSION

This part relates only to the categories examined so far, comparing the situation a decade ago, on

the eve of the outbreak of the events of the Arab Spring, with the situation today, 2019/2020. The state of fundamental rights and the conduct of substantive democracy are suffering from a basic failure that violates the expected rights of the citizens, according to a series of public opinion polls in the Arab world.

From the data presented so far, a clear picture emerges. All the countries in the Arab world have not yet completed the transition to a modern state. At the same time, it is necessary to distinguish countries whose conduct constitutes a polar contradiction to the desired criteria of a modern democratic state and the question of whether they are partially fulfilled and present a model of a "hybrid" state.

Based on the criteria examined so far regarding the period before the outbreak of the Arab Spring and today, it seems that Arab countries can be divided into three models. The categories are a "hybrid" state, an undemocratic state, and a mixed model of countries close to the undemocratic model but showing more moderate characteristics that are not yet sufficient to define them as a "hybrid" state. It is important to emphasize that this is a qualitative assessment based on the findings and not on the results in absolute values.

Table 7. *Hybrid States, Undemocratic State and a Mixed Category of States in the Arab World*

Hybrid Regimes	Mixed Model Hybrid and Non-democratic	Non Democratic Regimes
Tunisia after the Arab Spring Libya after Qaddafi Kuwait Jordan Lebanon Bahrain Morocco	Egypt The Palestinian Authority Iraq Qatar United Arab Emirates Algeria Tunisia - until the Arab Spring Yemen	Libya - until the fall of Qaddafi Syria Saudi Arabia

In the context of the Arab Spring, which led to the removal of four dominant rulers –in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, and Yemen - and to seriously undermining the status of two more - Syria and Bahrain - it is worth noting the negative correlation between the existence of a modern-Democratic state system and the probability of violence breaking out. Countries that can be defined as having a "hybrid" regime (see table 7) have managed to overcome the great storm

in the Arab world with relative calm. On the other hand, in the two most repressive regimes (Syria and Libya), the state underwent a severe uprising, and it is not yet clear how this will end. Tunisia, Egypt, and Yemen, in which the rulers were deposed, were also identified throughout the chapter as countries significantly affected (though less than Libya and Syria) by the development of characteristics of a hybrid regime.

Table 8. *State conduct in key issues – a conclusion*

Violation of civil rights	Official intervention in the election process	Corruption	Limitation of free press	Limitation of the opposition's activity	The State
Medium	Low	High	Medium	Low	Lebanon
Medium	Medium	High	Medium	Low	Kuwait

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Medium	Medium	High	Medium	Low	Morocco
High	Low	Very high	Medium	Low	Iraq
High	High	High	Medium	High	Algeria
High	Medium	Medium	High	Medium	Bahrain
High	High	Very high	Medium	Medium	Egypt
High	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	Jordan
High	Very high	Medium	Medium	Very high	United Arab Emirates
High	Low	Very high	High	Low	Yemen
Very high	Low		High	Low	The Palestinian Authority
Very high	High	High	High	Medium	Tunisia
Very high	Very high	High	High	Very high	Saudi Arabia
Very high	Very high	Very high	High	High	Syria
Very high	Very high	Very high	High	Very high	Libya
Medium	Low	High	Medium	Low	Lebanon

CONCLUSION

In the context of the Arab Spring events, four rulers of Arab countries - Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, and Yemen - were overthrown. Most of the countries that could be defined as a "hybrid" system managed to overcome the revolution in the Arab world with relative calm. However, in the two most repressive regimes, Syria and Libya, the degree of distance from democracy significantly led to the outbreak of a violent civil war. It is possible to conclude that the state of protests and the “revolutionary state” that developed before the Arab Spring and found its way to the public about a decade ago in the Arab Spring revolutions, are the result of historical developments in Arab societies. This is mainly the result of the widening contradiction between the people's understanding of their oppressive political system, and their rights under a desired democratic system.

The availability of means of communication and interaction with democratic countries and societies in the West, and perhaps in the Middle East itself, especially the Turkish situation (Khatib&Ghanem, 2018) which combined democracy and religion in a way that deals with the social reality in the Middle East, deepened the understanding among Arab societies of what they were missing concerning the type of regime they deserve. In this sense, the classic model of "growing expectations" is not enough to understand the revolutionary state in the Arab world, rather there is a need to add two new vessels. **First**, the dynamism associated with increased expectations, that is, the state of the increase in expectations is developing and increasing dramatically - as a result of the availability of more effective means of knowledge about democratic countries and the relationship between their democratic systems and their relative success. **Second**, there is a growing tension between what drives people to

reject their political systems and what they believe they deserve - the higher the tension between what exists and what is desired, the deeper the “revolutionary state” and the greater the potential for the outbreak of a revolution.

If we look back a decade ago, we will notice three cases: first, the emergence of revolutions and the overthrow of the regime and the head of the regime –in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, and Yemen. Second, the existence of protests and the beginning of revolutions were curbed by responding to the demands of the protesters –in Morocco and Jordan, for example. And third, political systems suppressed the revolutionary state with the power of money and cooptation - for example in Saudi Arabia - or suppressed a revolution by force of arms–in Syria. In all cases there was a "revolutionary state” - different in intensity, but in all cases it existed - as a result of this gap between what exists and what is sought.

In this paper I have attempted to understand whether this gap and tension exists today, and the answer is positive. In the majority of Arab states people believe in their right to a democratic system. Thus, the roots of the revolutionary state eight years ago still exist, and await either political or constitutional reform, or a democratic, hybrid, or integrated system. – or once again a return to revolution – The recent unrest in Lebanon, Algeria, and Sudan and a shield in Syria again, is a powerful signal to this possibility. The revolution still awaits its eruption, because its causes are at present even more powerful than circumstances a decade ago in the Arab Spring.

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