Examining Factors Contributing to the Entrenchment and Collapse of Authoritarianism Through the Lens of the Arab Spring

Zhijie Chen[1,a,*]

[1]*Knox Grammar School, New South Wales, Australia*
a. zchen26@knox.nsw.edu.au
*corresponding author

Abstract: This paper hopes to examine the reasons contributing to the failure of the Arab Spring to culminate in a lasting change in political reform and democratisation. The article utilises frameworks by previous authors to explain the phenomenon of the short-lived democracies in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) as well as provide additional insights of the author in obtaining a comprehensive understanding of the reason why autocratic states are so entrenched within MENA. At the end of this, the aim is to provide political substantiations regarding the failure of the Arab Spring, as opposed to the current focus surrounding violence and civil war as the driver to stunted democratic growth and autocratic resurgence. The article concludes that MENA countries are uniquely situated by their social, political and economic institutions and history that make democratic growth difficult unless as a means to achieve another priority, such as economic prosperity. This can be extrapolated towards analysing the behaviours of a variety of other states, democratic or autocratic, in their interactions with their population and foreign states.

Keywords: Arab Spring, Democratic Transition, Authoritarianism, Middle East.

1. Introduction

Whilst the West commonly regard democratic institutions and values as universally supported, people across the third world often reject democracy in favor of other interests such as stability, economic prosperity and religion. In particular, the Middle East has proved a hotspot for authoritarianism and dictatorships to flourish, and short-lived upheavals of dictatorships in the "Arab Spring" have only led to further autocratic consolidation and the disillusionment of democracy across the region. In 2022, the last legacy of the Arab Spring, Tunisia voted in a referendum to centralize power in the hands of its president, Kais Seiad. It's clear that notwithstanding the sporadic protests authoritarianism within the Middle East, many citizens of the Middle East were supportive of, or at the least, undisturbed of the return to the status quo. Through examining the failure of the Arab Spring and the entrenchment of autocratic institutions, it is evident that the Middle Eastern political system is not enforced through violence alone, but rather through the manipulation of political institutions and exploitation of unique economic and cultural circumstances in a manner that makes the establishment of democracy difficult in the present circumstances.

2.   The Arab Spring

On the 17th of December 2010, a Tunisian street vendor by the name of Mohamed Bouazizi, disenfranchised by government corruption and violence against him, publicly committed suicide by self-immolation in front of the local governor's office. His death was the catalyst for a wave of protests across the Middle East for government reforms and democratic accountability known as the "Arab Spring", leading to four leaders being ousted from power and civil demonstrations in several other nations. However, Western hopes for democracy to reign in the Middle East were soon dashed by the fall of these countries into civil war, autocratic rule and the rise of terrorism culminating in over a quarter million deaths and millions of refugees [1].

2.1.   Economic Decline

Whilst conventionally characterized as a civil uprising in support of establishing democracies within the Middle East, the Arab Spring in reality arose due to economic grievances, as opposed to political, against the government. Economic growth has largely plateaued in the 2010s compared to previous decades, due to the combination of the Great Recession and the increasing concentration of wealth of the upper class. Furthermore, the youth, the marginalized and the urban poor were often left behind by economic opportunities. This is ultimately reflected by surveys from Arab Barometer, which asked Tunisian protesters after the Arab Spring their reasons for participation: a majority (63%) of respondents cited the reason as being a weak economy, followed by corruption (17%). Notably, only 14% cited the lack of political freedom as the reason they participated in the Arab Spring.

2.1.1. Democracy

This is not to say the Arabic populace does not support democracy, but rather they view democracy to achieve economic prosperity. As shown in the table below, a substantial proportion of Middle Eastern respondents highly prioritize the economic aspects of democracy (unemployment benefits, wealth tax and equal income), often equal to or above social issues such as women or civil rights. The implications of which are clear - the rise of democracy across the Middle East, and perhaps by extrapolation, the developed world writ large was peculiarly the manifestation of economic issues more than the perception of political restrictions (as showing in Table 1).

Table 1: Respondents' View of Essential Characteristics of Democracy (Source: World Values Survey, wave 6 (2010–14) [2].

Country	Government taxing rich to subsidize poor	Government providing unemployment benefits	State equalizing people's incomes	Free elections	Protection of civil liberties	Equal rights for women
Egypt	25.3	24.4	27.4	45.4	27.7	24.7
Jordan	30.9	20.3	8.8	21.7	12.9	17.5
Morocco	36.2	52.7	37.2	50.1	39.1	46.4
Tunisia	30.0	40.2	221	47.1	41.9	36.4
Yemen	47.9	42.8	31.3	69.1	38.3	42.0

2.2. Spring Turns into Winter

If there were hopes that the series of protests was going to liberalize Arabic countries radically, these hopes were quickly shattered. In some nations, such as Jordan and Algeria, the political leadership offered economic concessions to these individuals, leading to the protests eventually dying down [3]. In many other nations, the rapid ousting of political leaders such as the Libyan Leader Muammar Qaddafi led to an unfilled power vacuum that was soon to be filled by rebel factions, independent warlords and terrorist organizations. In Iraq, demonstrations against religious persecution of Shiite Muslims led to the ousting of PM Nouri al-Maliki and the rise of ISIS.

This period, termed by political scientist Zhang Weiwei as the "Arab Winter" [4], soon followed the Arab Spring. It marked the return of authoritarianism and Islamic extremism within the Middle Eastern countries, ultimately undoing many of the democratic establishments existing within the Arab Spring. This period of political instability was in part responsible for the series of civil wars and ethnic tensions in the Middle East, leading to USD 800 billion lost in economic damages and hundreds of thousands killed due to starvation, war or disease [5].

Nonetheless, the Arab Spring was able to produce varying time lengths of regime changes. The most successful of these is Tunisia, the origin of the Arab Spring, which saw a lasting increase in global freedom nearly a decade after the Arab Spring. Egypt and Libya enjoyed temporary successes before they returned to pre-Arab Spring levels of political freedom. Other states, especially where the government tightened restrictions and sanctioned the use of violence against protesters, observed a fall in their freedom scores after the Arab Spring.

Overall, as showing in Figure 1, whilst a valiant attempt by the common masses to reform systematic injustices within their governments, the Arab Spring ultimately culminated in significant regional instability and violence in the Middle East.
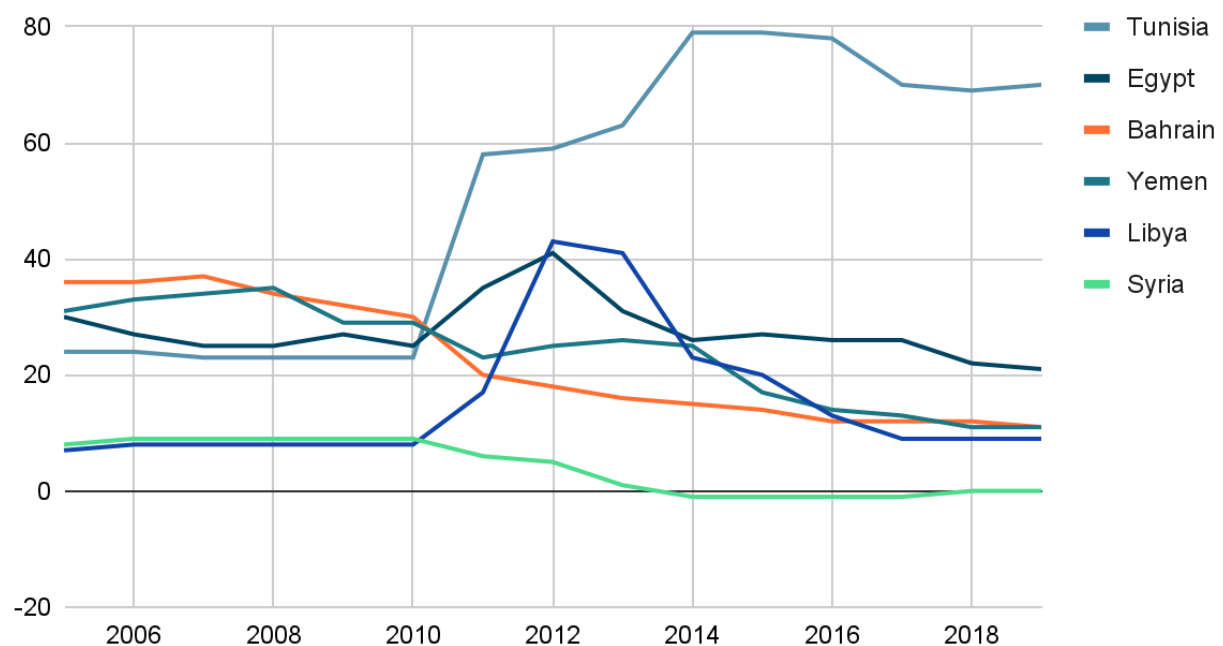

Figure 1: Freedom scores of MENA countries between the years 2005-2019 [6].

3.   From Tunisia to Libya

The failure of the Arab Spring to produce stable, reformed governments is of great significance to examine, providing insight as to how an amalgamation of cultural, economic or regional considerations may create favorable or unfavorable grounds for the formation of democracy. It ought to be noted that countries within the Middle East had varying degrees of success in achieving civil reform from the most successful case in Tunisia [7], in which a democratic government was established, to the chaos and violence which occurred in Syria. This journal posits that a difference in social and cultural factors between these nations was responsible for the difference in the outcome of these nations in the Arab Spring.

3.1.   The Democratic Infrastructure

The nations that succeeded in achieving their aims after the Arab Spring - or at the very least, retained the system of reformed governance comparatively longer had preexisting infrastructural conditions favorable to democratic growth. These infrastructural conditions comprised political, economic and military factors that influenced how civilians engaged with the state and the resulting power dynamic.

3.1.1. Political Engagement

Infrastructural conditions refer to existing political institutions and regulations that may be conducive to political reform. This occurs through the acts of a variety of arms in government, ranging from central executive leadership to specific portfolios to grassroots bureaucracy. The first is the government's tolerance for the exercise of civil liberties such as freedom of expression that facilitates room for discursion and transmission of ideas. These conditions encourage civil engagement in government, in which citizens are more cognizant of the imperative and capacity for civil reform [8]. When the large majority of the population is prevented from exposure to such ideas, protests lack the necessary political support to succeed and hence fizzle away. Political education hence becomes integral to the success of the revolution, in which a population aware of their political rights and the capacity of protests and strikes to force the government to acquiesce to demands is a population far more able to achieve political reform.

3.1.2. The Middle Class

The socioeconomic structure of Middle Eastern nations, in particular, whether or not they have a robust middle class, is similarly crucial in determining the longevity of democracy. In nations without a strong middle class, economic inequality becomes immensely significant and social barriers insurmountable, translating to the concentration of political power to the elite [9]. This is because the middle class can access education and is not plagued by the question of their subsistence translating into a demand for political participation in the form of a democracy or civil reform that maintains the integrity and security of the middle class. This is exemplified in Tunisia, where the Arab Spring was the most successful, in which the country had a strong middle class and one of the best education systems in North Africa before 2010 [10].

3.1.3. The Power of the Coercive Apparatus

Notably within the Middle East, the military plays a significant role regarding whether democratic transitioning and reform succeeds. That is, whether the military obeys or refuses orders of the political elite to suppress the protesters with force. In Syria and Bahrain, the military decided to obey; the uprising was quickly quelled after protestors were brutally attacked by the military and police [11]. In Tunisia, the military refused and even supported the protesters and was instrumental in pushing

President Ben Ali from power. Ultimately, the military leadership makes its decision based on a calculus of harms and benefits. On one hand, acts of suppression could damage the prestige of the military and cause lower-ranked soldiers to defect. On the other, militaries, especially those with intertwined interests with the current government, fear that it may be "ruined by reform" or its powers reduced and regulated [12]. The complex political-military relationship is a critical factor in the transitioning of a new political entity. All these reasons suggest that whilst both drivers to democracy, it is counterintuitively the existence of a stable and somewhat prosperous society as opposed to sustained periods of desperation and impoverishment, that is the greater accelerant to democratization. This may also explain the failures of 'rapid democratization' within states such as Iraq and Syria following the US invasions and the establishment of a democratic government – without the favorable prerequisites, civil reform, democratic or not, is bound to fail.

3.2. Civil Networks and the Social Capital

Aside from formal institutions, the health of communal relationships and organizations is also a crucial factor in discriminating between successful and unsuccessful cases of the Arab Spring. The civil network is the 'informal institution' that creates strength in connection between individuals, spanning from anything to trade unions, religion, family and communal bonds. A strong civil network results in the social capital necessary to facilitate trust and harmony within individuals [13]. Social capital, a term coined by Robert D Putnam, refers to "features of social life – networks, norms, and trust that enable participants to act together more effectively to pursue shared objectives"[13]. Countries with higher social capital typically have a higher chance of achieving sustained political reform, as collective mobilization is far more likely to occur, consequently leading to greater pressures towards the government to be held more accountable towards political reform.

3.2.1. Tunisia and Egypt

A strong civil network is also responsible for resilient collaboration within communities in times of crisis, preventing splintering and factionalism within protest movements. This can be observed in which protesters within Egypt were able to achieve relative success in part owing to the strong communal bonds they possessed. Through the trust and reliance Egyptians had for one another, the demonstrators were able to coordinate their actions and self-discipline principles of non-violence even though there was no centralized executive group leading the protests [10]. Conversely, in Libya during the Arab Spring, Qaddafi's political strategy to retain power by playing groups against one another produced a culture of suspicion and distrust among different organizations and ethnicities [14]. Coupled with the lack of civil organizations such as trade unions, Libyans turned to family institutions for security and solace – and it is amongst the lines of ethnicities, tribes and clans that multiple secessionist movements arose following the Arab Spring.

3.2.2. The Role of Civil Networks in Stability

Strong civil networks and social capital are necessary for a functional democracy as it encourages political engagement and accountability by citizens. Many nations in the Middle East struggled after the Arab Spring because decades of despotic suppression of expression and association produced a fragmented society that would come into conflict with each other after political stability. Historical distrust and conflict between different interest groups have hence meant their relationship become politicized into interactions between friend and enemy leading to a rise in tensions for "to the enemy belongs the ever-present possibility of combat" [15]. The scars and grudges of different factions within countries in the Middle East are particularly fierce, and their grievances must be resolved to prevent instability following civil reform or political change.

3.3. The Perceived Legitimacy of Governance

A fundamental reason post-Arab Spring governments were quickly overthrown was that they lacked the sources of legitimacy consistent with Middle Eastern culture that allowed them to consolidate their rule. It is useful to approach this through the framework of political scientist Max Weber regarding the types of political legitimacy – legal-rational, traditional and charismatic [16] – and how these forms interact with each other in the Arab World.

3.3.1. The Importance of Political Legitimacy

The significance of political legitimacy is intuitive but often poorly articulated due to its intangible nature, yet it is what determines whether a state perseveres in the face of rapid political change. Whilst the definition and concepts of legitimacy have shifted over time, the core question was "whether a given rulership is believed to be based on good title by most men subject to it" [17]. Indeed, citizens who intrinsically believe that the state has the mandate to rule over them instead of being coerced through threats of violence or imprisonment make better subjects because there is less reason to rebel even when given the opportunity. Through such, less political and financial capital is directed to coercive state apparatuses when citizens are far less likely to protest or riot when it seeks the reign of government and its reign as legitimate.

3.3.2. The Compelling Case of Traditional Legitimacy

The Arab Spring provides a case study regarding how the three types of political legitimacy have fared in the Middle East. Notably, countries that relied on a source of traditional legitimacy, which refers to the belief "in the sanctity of immemorial traditions" [16], proved more stable than their purely autocratic counterparts. Monarchial countries such as Jordan, Kuwait and Bahrain only experienced government reforms whilst non-monarchial countries such as Tunisia, Syria and Iraq were overthrown or experienced major protests [18]. The people's relative support for traditional bases of authority may reflect the unique cultural environment of the Middle East, in which civilians commonly accept rule by a dynastic institution, such as through a tribe or caliphate, where leadership is passed down to a family. Furthermore, monarchies in the Middle East are inextricably connected to Islam and hence make calls to overthrow the government in a highly religious society unpopular as it is dangerous.

3.3.3. The Unappealing Nature of Legal-Rational Legitimacy

Comparatively, the legal-rational base of legitimacy of nascent states after the Arab Spring proved to be ineffective in winning the hearts and minds of the Arab people. Legal-rational legitimacy is based on an implicit mutual agreement between the government and its people regarding the rule of law, the extent of government powers and the rights of its constituents [16]. Hence, a significant degree of trust is required by the people that the government can meet such standards. For the majority of individuals, this trust is best facilitated when there exists a peaceful transition of power, as opposed to violent ousting of governments from power, which they viewed as legitimate to some degree. The absence of a peaceful transition of power also necessarily translates to a power vacuum. The lack of a commonly accepted actor for the continuation of such legitimacy invites different factions to attempt and seize political power for themselves, each believing they have a chance and are the rightful successors of the country. As seen in the civil war immediately after Qaddafi's death between different organizations and militia groups in Libya, this necessarily invites conflict and hence disenfranchisement in the new state.

3.3.4. Variants of Charismatic Legitimacy and Consequences

The disillusionment and disenfranchisement associated with both new and existing social structures then produce favorable conditions for the third form of legitimacy – charismatic legitimacy. Charismatic legitimacy often centers around the exceptional qualities and character of one individual, often presenting them as the only individual capable of resolving a fundamental problem within society. In the Middle East, this usually revolves around a leader who claims to be responsible for manifesting the teachings of Islam or some form of a divine mission. Hence, Islamist movements and terrorist organizations gained a significant following, appealing to a population disappointed by modern state institutions to fulfil their needs and instead turning to religion as a means and an end to the tumultuous status quo. For example, the numbers of Al Qaeda and ISIS swelled after the Arab Spring, benefitting from a fractured and dysfunctional government that invited individuals to seek alternate forms of authority.

4. The Rentier State

The Rentier State Theory (RST), first conceptualized by Hossein Mahdavy, additionally serves as an additional frame of reference in understanding the failure of the democratization wave in the Middle East. Rentier states refer to states that derive a significant part of their revenue from the payment of foreign countries for the use of their land and resources as opposed to productive effort [19]. The unique geographical situation of the Middle East's possession of a large amount of oil encourages rent-generating behavior that may unintentionally or otherwise, translate to harmful consequences for civil reform.

4.1. Impacts on Democratisation

In a society in which the generation of wealth is largely connected to the state or a select group of elites, this produces unfavorable grounds for democratization. Previous scholars have already discussed the implications of this – the people of rentier states are highly reliant on distributive frameworks of governments (e.g. welfare, handouts, etc.) and hence are less likely to demand structural change in government [20]. As highlighted previously in the paper, the majority of constituents within the Arab States see democracy as a means of achieving economic strength rather than an end, and as long as the government is able to keep providing cash, welfare and benefits to its people, then it will enjoy relative support. Furthermore, as oil is a readily accessible resource that requires no investments in productivity improvements or risks (as the importance of oil in any modern industrial economy means demand is relatively stable), there are no incentives for the growth of other non-resource-based sectors. Hence, the majority of individuals are deprived of a meaningful contribution to the economy, which means the vast form of civil action, such as strikes, protests and boycotts becomes ineffective towards the state.

4.2. Relation Between the Rentier State and Political Repression

What is less discussed, however, is the relationship of rentier states in facilitating and mechanizing coercive apparatuses to better consolidate power within the country. The reliance of rentier states on external rents meant that it is far less dependent on taxation from its constituents – in fact, many Arab states have little to no income tax [21]. This means civilians lack both the justification and willpower to demand accountability towards the allocation of the government budget. Hence, governments are far better able to siphon such rents towards the strengthening of coercive institutions – the military, secret police, and intelligence – to suppress any vocalization of rebellion against the state. For example, the secret police of Jordan possessed thousands of informants and offices in every university,

poised to remove any signs of rebellion [22]. The funding for such extensive operations can only best be facilitated in a rentier state where the is little transparency regarding the allocation of such funds.

4.3. The Fall of Rentier States

However, modern geopolitical, environmental and technological shifts may pose a threat to the rentier states of the Middle East. As the world's countries shift to renewable energy and oil reserves become depleted, states will be unable to sustain their rent-seeking behavior. The consequence of such has manifested in examples such as Iraq and Venezuela – both states whose increasing dependence on oil led to civil strife or economic instability [23]. The rentier states in the Middle East dependent on oil are hence caught in a binary of difficult decisions: either to diversify the economy and construct entire industries from scratch to fill the vacuum of the bloated oil industry or collapse under an increasingly discontent population. The window of opportunity to take the former is increasingly narrowing, especially considering the effort of transforming a country's economy is costly as it is time-consuming [24]. Only time will tell whether the states that are most dependent on the export of oil – Kuwait, Libya, Saudi Arabia and Algeria (Figure 2) – will have the political willpower and stability to take this opportunity.
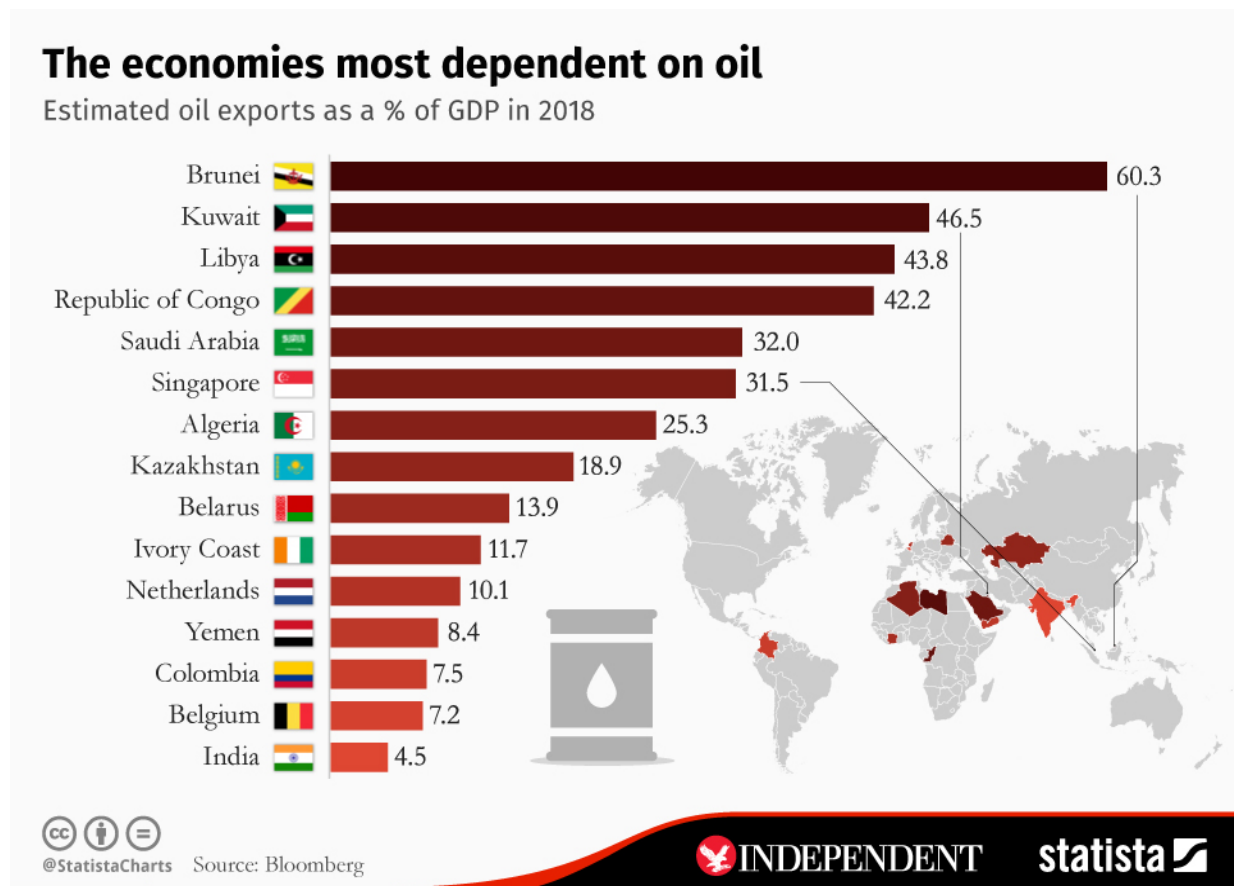

The economies most dependent on oil
Estimated oil exports as a % of GDP in 2018

Country	%
Brunei	60.3
Kuwait	46.5
Libya	43.8
Republic of Congo	42.2
Saudi Arabia	32.0
Singapore	31.5
Algeria	25.3
Kazakhstan	18.9
Belarus	13.9
Ivory Coast	11.7
Netherlands	10.1
Yemen	8.4
Colombia	7.5
Belgium	7.2
India	4.5

@StatistaCharts   Source: Bloomberg

INDEPENDENT   statista

Figure 2: The countries with the highest proportion of exports based on oil [25].

4.4. The Realpolitik of the Arab Spring

The other dimension of domestic interactions within the rentier state is then the external interactions with fellow countries in the international arena, which responded in ways to benefit their interests to the detriment of the protesters in the Arab Spring. In particular, the West were criticized for their

contradictory handling of the Arab Spring to secure their own interests [26]. Prior to the Arab Spring, the existing political entities that ruled countries of the Middle East often either provided favorable trade deals to oil or geopolitically aligned to the West. Due to historical reasons such as US involvement in the creation of the state of Israel or interference in Middle Eastern affairs, the majority of Middle Eastern citizens were antagonistic towards the United States. Hence a democracy representative of the will of its anti-US constituent translates an economic and geopolitical shift unfavorable to the US strategic interest, such as the cancellation of trade deals or alliances with its geopolitical opponents such as Russia.

The hypocritical handling of the West concerning the Arab Spring can best be demonstrated in a comparison between pro-West and anti-West states, respectively Yemen and Libya. Whilst both countries engaged in violent massacres to repress calls for political change, the Obama administration was quick to authorize missile strikes on Libya but provided additional support to Yemen and was reluctant to criticize the regime. In fact, the United States doubled military assistance to the Yemeni government in 2010, funds later used to silence its domestic opponents [27].

Whilst the extent to which the West was complicit in the failure of the Arab Spring is vague and debatable, the long-term implications this has on the democratic movement in the Arab states should be considered. Many Middle Eastern intellectuals, protesters and human rights activists were understandably frustrated with the inaction or collusion of the West concerning oppressive regimes. Trust and support of democracy began to decline when it was commonly believed the biggest proponents of such ideals were complicit in the dictatorships of the Middle East.

Furthermore, this signaled to dictatorships in the Middle East and beyond an increasingly clearer message: that the foreign policy of the West is becoming incredibly Schmidtian in the emphasis on friend-enemy distinctions [15] as opposed to idealistic notions of democratic values. The ally of the West does not necessarily have to be a democratic one – as long as it benefits and complies with Washington, London and Berlin, then the political entity will enjoy the support of the West. Notably all great powers follow this model of realpolitik to some extent, but it was the West that was involved in the Arab Spring because it had the most to lose [28].

5. Conclusion

It has been nearly 14 years since Mohamed Bouazizi committed suicide through the act of burning himself in public, a defining moment within Arab history that sent tremors amongst the established political autocracies. Despite the failure, the flames of the Arab Spring continue even today as long as concepts of and belief in civil reform, democratic or otherwise, remain in the hearts of the Arab people. By an unfortunate intersection of its historical, geopolitical and economic attributes, however, the Middle East provides unfavourable grounds for a democracy to thrive. From foreign interests to economic structure to the strength of the civil network, there exist several prerequisites that ought to be considered and resolved before something similar to the Arab Spring could succeed again. Overall, the failure of the Arab Spring to bring lasting political reform serves as much of a reminder to the world as it is to the Middle East, hopefully allowing us to appreciate the nuances between regions of the world when considering the likelihood of dismantling despotic systems for good.

References

[1] Khallaf, S. (2013). "Displacement in the Middle East and North Africa: Between an Arab Winter and the Arab Spring." Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy and International Affairs. https://web.archive.org/web/20141018201147/http://www.aub.edu.lb/ifi/international_affairs/Documents/working_paper_series/20130828_IA_WP_AUB_Paper_on_Displacement_in_Arab_Spring.pdf

[2] Ghanem, H. (2016). Roots of the Arab Spring. In The Arab Spring Five Years Later: Toward Greater Inclusiveness (pp. 39–64). Brookings Institution Press. http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7864/j.ctt1657tv8.6

[3]   Ciprut, J. V. (2017). Easter in Winter: The "Arab Spring" Seven Years Later. Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic
        Studies. http://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep16857

[4]   Weiwei, Z. (2011b). The China Wave: Rise of a Civilizational State. World Century Publishing Corporation.

[5]   Rivlin, P. (2014, January 23). $800 Billion and Rising: The Costs of the Arab Winter. Http://Www.dayan.com/; M
        oshe Dayan Center for Middle Eastern and African Studies. https://web.archive.org/web/20141023064230/http://
        www.dayan.org/sites/default/files/Iqtisadi%202014/Iqtisadi_Jan_14_ENG.pdf

[6]   Freedom House. (2024). Countries and Territories. Freedomhouse.org; Freedom House. https://freedomhouse.or
        g/countries/freedom-world/scores

[7]   KHAN, M., & MEZRAN, K. (2015). Tunisia: The Last Arab Spring Country. Atlantic Council. http://www.jstor.org
        /stable/resrep03445

[8]   SCHAUER, F. (1983). FREE SPEECH AND THE ARGUMENT FROM DEMOCRACY. Nomos, 25, 241–256.
        http://www.jstor.org/stable/24219368

[9]   LU, C. (2005). MIDDLE CLASS AND DEMOCRACY: STRUCTURAL LINKAGE. International Review of Modern
        Sociology, 31(2), 157–178. http://www.jstor.org/stable/41421642

[10]   Anderson, L. (2011). Demystifying the Arab Spring: Parsing the Differences Between Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya.
        Foreign Affairs, 90(3), 2–7. http://www.jstor.org/stable/23039401

[11]   Lutterbeck, D. (n.d.). The Role of Armed Forces in the Arab Uprisings. https://www.um.edu.mt/library/oar/bitstrea
        m/123456789/39524/1/The_role_of_armed_forces_in_the_Arab_uprisings_2012.pdf

[12]   Bermeo, N. (1997). Myths of Moderation: Confrontation and Conflict during Democratic Transitions. Comparative
        Politics, 29(3), 305–322. https://doi.org/10.2307/422123

[13]   Putnam, R. D. (1995). Tuning In, Tuning Out: The Strange Disappearance of Social Capital in America. PS:
        Political Science and Politics, 28(4), 664–683. https://doi.org/10.2307/420517

[14]   VERICAT, J. S., & HOBRARA, M. (2018). The Fall of the Qaddafi Regime and the Breakdown of Libya. In From
        the Ground Up: UN Support to Local Mediation in Libya (pp. 3–5). International Peace Institute.
        http://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep19632.6

[15]   Schmitt, C. (1932). The Concept of the Political (pp. 19–79). Duncker & Humblot (Munich).

[16]   Weber, M. (1968). Economy and Society (pp. 212–269). Bedminster Press.

[17]   Friedrich, C. J. (1963). Man and His Government: An Empirical Theory of Politics (p. 234). McGraw Hill.

[18]   Llamaran, A. (2016, May 5). How Republics Fell and Monarchies Survived the Arab Spring. Chicago Policy Review.
        https://chicagopolicyreview.org/2016/05/05/how-republics-fell-and-monarchies-survived-the-arab-spring/

[19]   Losman, D. L. (2010). The Rentier State And National Oil Companies: An Economic And Political Perspective.
        Middle East Journal, 64(3), 427–445. http://www.jstor.org/stable/40783108

[20]   Beblawi, H. (1987). The Rentier State in the Arab World. Arab Studies Quarterly, 9(4), 383–398.
        http://www.jstor.org/stable/41857943

[21]   Mansour, M., & Zolt, E. (2023). Personal Income Taxes in the Middle East and North Africa: Prospects and Possi
        bilities. IMF. https://www.imf.org/-/media/Files/Publications/WP/2023/English/wpiea2023034-print-pdf.ashx

[22]   MacFarquhar, N. (2005). Heavy Hand of the Secret Police Impeding Reform in the Arab World. The New York
        Times. https://www.nytimes.com/2005/11/14/world/middleeast/heavy-hand-of-the-secret-police-impeding-reform-
        in-arab-world.html

[23]   Lander, E. (2016). The implosion of Venezuela's rentier state. Transnationalinstitute. https://www.tni.org/en/publi
        cation/the-implosion-of-venezuelas-rentier-state

[24]   Althani, A. J. (2023). Economic Development Models of Doha and Dubai: A Comparative Analysis. Springer.
        https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-981-19-7796-1_26

[25]   McCarthy, N. (n.d.). Infographic: The economies most dependent on oil. Statista Infographics. Retrieved September
        19, 2024, from https://www.statista.com/chart/4284/the-economies-most-dependent-on-oil/

[26]   Gamal M. Selim. (2013). The United States and the Arab Spring: The Dynamics of Political Engineering. Arab
        Studies Quarterly, 35(3), 255–272. https://doi.org/10.13169/arabstudquar.35.3.0255

[27]   Knickmeyer, E. (2010). Yemen's Double Game. Foreign Policy; Foreign Policy. https://foreignpolicy.com/2010/1
        2/07/yemens-double-game-2/

[28]   Dannreuther, R. (2014). Russia and the Arab Spring: Supporting the Counter-Revolution. Journal of European
        Integration, 37(1), 77–94. https://doi.org/10.1080/07036337.2014.975990