



Revolution, Unrest and Dissent against Human Rights Violations by the Political Class: The Rise of a new cross-national culture?

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Abstract:

With the global upheaval rounding up on corners of not only the European world, shaking up the Eastern Nations and dominating the Asian Countries; a new fold spirit has gripped the global common man; the rage against the staunch political class has been slowly combining with the youth unrest to change the autocratic systems which has been shadowed by the apparent democracy seems to be uniting the world. This is a new world culture which is the age surrounded by media explosion, more informed citizens who get involved in the world affairs being supported by access to all information due to no barriers in technology is rising, a culture that does not believe in boundaries but justice; where profits rule with the fair international trade; where human rights is the charter everyone swears by and where growth is a engine, not a ticking explosive. In this paper, we analyse the world conditions and their impact on the changing cultural perceptions of governments.

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Introduction

The accepted definition of “unrest” as given is a state of dissatisfaction, disturbance, and agitation, typically involving public demonstrations or disorder. Over the last few years, we have seen the world culture, perceptions and behaviour change as a result of technology boom. Media, no longer defined only by the way of newspapers and paper publications has its presence so wide on multiple platforms that we as a global world seem to be forming a platform which is defined by common cultures, values and perception. These cultures, values and perceptions include increased vocal intolerance towards corruption, injustice and laggard economies. We will look to understand and find the origin of where and why was this change initiated.

There is multiple reasoning, some supported with facts and a perceptive theory that seems to be lingering around for this global change in culture that we see.

Over the flow of the paper, we will slowly move backwards from global world to division within continents to countries and finally understand whether the change has originated from the smallest part of the global world which are the regions or whether this is the nearing of human ice age: an impending change with evolution and growth is a by-product of the increased role of technology, media and an informed common global citizen.

The divisions given as below will be assisting us in forming an integrated view in the end to determine our common global world culture supported multiple factors where media and technology are dominating.

1. Middle Eastern Development lead change
2. Asia dominated by China & its neighbours
3. Africa's urgent need to build up
4. European strength becoming its weakness
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1.1 Middle Eastern Development led change

The Iraqi insurgency, Syrian Civil War and the Egyptian turmoil dominate the Middle Eastern upheaval happening under the gross happenings of the Arab Spring.

The Arab Spring (Arabic: العربي الربيع, *ar-rabīʿ al-ʿarabī*) is a term for the revolutionary wave of demonstrations and protests (both non-violent and violent), riots, and civil wars in the Arab world that began on 18 December 2010.

By December 2013, rulers have been forced from power in Tunisia, Egypt (twice), Libya, and Yemen; civil uprisings have erupted in Bahrain and Syria; major protests have broken out in Algeria, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Morocco, and Sudan; and minor protests have occurred in Mauritania, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Djibouti, Western Sahara, and the Palestinian territories.

When we see all the occurrences around the eastern world we tend to move to find the reasons towards why were there rebel groups in the first place in all of these eastern countries? Also, we see how is the common mans arrangement differing from the methods previously adopted by revolting citizens. Countries rich in most resources seem to be losing their most important resource – peace and humanity. We attempt to cater to the questions why the Ba’ath Party led by Bashar Al-Assad since the 2000 caused such damage in Syria; Or why has the Tahir Square which was a place of unity and peace today become a depiction of the citizens against the system.

The blame has been directed essentially on the dissatisfaction from the local governments by the citizen as we have been observing throughout the eastern world. But it seems like either the realisation and the dissatisfaction has been there all along regarding the malpractices & ignorance of governments but voicing the concern to the higher authorities is part of the new emerging culture.

Numerous factors have led to the protests, including issues such as dictatorship or absolute monarchy, human rights violations, political corruption (demonstrated by Wikileaks diplomatic cables), economic decline, unemployment, extreme poverty, and a number of demographic structural factors, such as a large percentage of educated but dissatisfied youth within the population.

Over the years in Syrian Civil War, loss of life and property has not only left the people distraught but the sense of not wanting to belong to a particular nation has seen a uprising. The most recent happening in Syria on the 21st August 2013 where the nerve gas had been used by the Government run by the Ba'ath Party, people have lost the faith in governments. They have organised themselves into groups which are now getting strong enough to fight for not only their human rights, but also protect their land and their nation rather than be a spec under the laid system.

In civil wars for freedom which used to be once for foreign rulers, is now being fought against their own people. The agitation is centred in a particular methodology the eastern world seems to be adopting. These revolts are more organized than ever and being spread on every forum to the far opposite side of the world. There seems to be unanimous support from citizens of all nations across the continents. This is a dangerous happening for the political unjust systems in place and that is why we see political leaders announcing their stepping down by the end of their term. This happening is not just the governments doing; this is also the change that the mankind is going through. With the happening of the burning man who put himself on fire when he did not have a job despite education and was fined for selling fruits spread through all the other countries enflaming a sense of injustice in their respective nations and uniting groups to speak against the violations they were undergoing. This spread was a direct result of the information fire that spreads within seconds across the world now. The strongest of leaders have started to be careful of the steps they are undertaking to run a nation. The sentiments of the citizens in the eastern world is heightened because of not only a urgent need of change in leadership which they perceive has been exploiting them but because being part of a progressive world and knowing their nation is not progressing is no longer acceptable. There is no barrier to information and the eastern world wants to be part of the global world at a common stand rather letting the western world have a upper hand.

In the Middle Eastern world which comprises of Yemen, Egypt, Bahrain, Iraq & Syria has been seeing a continuous fight against the system. The origin of this not just the injustice perceived by the current political system, but also the long change in leadership and dictatorship that has dominated their nations over the years. The continuous conflict that exists is the result of evolution of thinking in the society over a period of time. Yet there is a commonality amongst all these uprising that we notice happening around the world, they are all derived out of violation of the basic human rights of the citizens and not the fad to overthrow the rulers of the state. The agitation existing that no longer be only blamed on the cause that there may be few rebel groups in the society causing unrest, as it happens by extremist religious groups, but the revolt is for the opportunity the citizen seeks to have being part of a nation.

A citizen does not willingly stand oppression and under-development; a citizen no longer agrees to adhoc laws that are implemented only because the head of state enforces them and does not justify them; and this is because of the widest form of information flow that has happened from the western to the eastern side of the world. The need that the citizens of these nations feel to revolt against the state irrespective to the loss of the life and property occurring in the way of achieving it only gives the indication not only about the urgency of the situation, but the helplessness the citizens associate with the situation of unemployment, poverty, and income class-gap that is widening with the day.

The method in which the eastern world has come together has a bigger role of media and technology flow assisting in the information flow and spreading an awakening which wouldn't have reached all the corners. Note that this happening is not only particular to the eastern world, only the reasons to have such organized protests are particular to the eastern world. As we go further in the paper, we will find the various nature of protests but as strong a presence and affect of media and information flow.

1.2 Asia dominated by China & its Neighbours

The Asian world is coming to be known as the most progressive part of the global world. And in this progress there is an underlying turmoil that is dominating the Asian group of countries.

Thailand & China are undergoing a new found revolt and political stress. In Thailand, the main reason the demonstrators' alleged beef with the government is that it is corrupt and it is known that Thai governments are traditionally corrupt. The situation in Thailand is becoming increasingly dangerous as demonstrators call for the departure of the democratically elected government. This yet again seems to be coinciding with the incidents in the Eastern part of the world. The intolerance towards corruption and voicing it to the extent of stopping operations and daily progress is a new age problem.

In China, the incident which took place as a suicide attack was Uighur anger at the government's policy toward ethnic minorities, which the Uighurs regard as repressive. Additionally, Chinese Government has decided that the activists and outspoken intellectuals should be routinely put under house arrest or other forms of surveillance at politically sensitive times. Not only this, China would likely herald further attempts by the government to reduce activism and curb online freedom of expression.

This directly suggests to our contention that the media and technology a tool of the globalised world is being contained by the political parties in order to keep the citizens at bay from the information flow happening across the world. This is also a advocate of social instability growing to continue despite the existence of China's rapid economic development.

Alongwith these issues, the primary trigger that we can notice in Asian countries such as China & Thailand is that the requisitioning of rural land for personal gains and lucrative property deals by greedy local governments continues to be a trigger of hundreds of "mass incidents" in China every year.

Even if these countries do not appear on the brink of an Arab-style upheaval, many Chinese academics say the next few years could see mushrooming instability, characterised by slower economic growth and a widening gap between rich and poor. China's outgoing leaders have tried to suppress debate about ways of reforming the political system to allow the public to voice their grievances more freely. But many analysts believe there is a pressing need for such reform. Today's "China model", as some in China and abroad were tempted to call it after Western economies fell into disarray three years ago, appears increasingly unsustainable.

The control over the media (online & paper) along with locking away every individual involved in protest is not the solution for the Asian countries. They are going to be the prominent growth drivers in the coming years and if the expression of the citizen is pressured to be silent, it will be a silent bomb waiting for explosion which will be the doom of the countries who have massive capability to lead the global world.

1.3 Africa's urgent need to build up

In Africa, rising food prices have an undeniably disproportionate impact on poor populations who often devote over half of their income to food purchases. Economic hardships resulting from rising food prices could, however, manifest in many other forms. Even if people focus their protest on the government, they may demand economic relief in other sectors such as housing, utilities, or fuel if they consider the government powerless to control rising food prices. Or they may seek a wholesale change in political leadership if they consider the current leaders to be incapable of creating favorable economic conditions. The unrest with the population has more to do with the ever growing poverty and very little relief over the years. The population out of being subject to much impoverish economic standards have seen an emergence in representation which do not support the government, rather are anti – government.

The unrest in Egypt and the global situation of the Somalia Pirates is not a result of only corruption or natural poverty; Africa is a nation rich in resources which have been huddled up only the government making the population suffer at large leaving them to fend for their basic necessities.

The nature of protests in Egypt have become one of the most united protests that the emerging global world has seen. The unrest was more so because of the autocratic powers controlling the population which was even more unacceptable than it had been in the previous revolts. With the opening of the global economy, we see that not only has the citizen become more informed but also demands justice.

Worldover media was present in Egypt during the happenings of ousting Morsi and there were attempts to restricting them including the occurrence of rape of a journalist who was dragged to the Tahrir Square. As discussed previously, the happenings in Egypt were initiated by the citizens in the form of a Tamarod to collect 15 million signatures to call for early elections. This would have not been possible had the online & offline media and technology not been a supportive component. When the pro-morsi supporters controlled four television channels to outrightly kill anti-morsi supporters, they were shut down.

The role of media and technology today has emerged to have huge importance in framing the direction of the global common man. The Egyptian Army used an active facebook page informing the supporters and combining strengths with more. There has never been a greater revolt that the world has seen in the modern global world which had a great role of influence, support and spread through the global media and information flow.

1.4 European strength becoming its weakness

Europe has been rocked with riots and unrest over a period of time and has seen unrest consecutively from Rose Revolution in Georgia in 2003 to the Ukraine unrest in 2013. The blame is on the rising social inequality, growing unemployment and the absence of popular confidence in the region's governments.

The Rose Revolution in Georgia is given to the disintegration of political class and rise of NGO's. An important factor in the Rose Revolution was the independent television channel Rustavi-2, which served as an ally for the opposition movement for years. It was highly critical of the regime, and openly supported the opposition. Georgia's broad Freedom of Information law gave media outlets the legal protection to criticize the government, making it a leader amongst the former Eastern Bloc. Nonetheless, the government tried repeatedly to shut Rustavi-2 down. The station operated out of Tbilisi and managed to survive the regime's harassment and intimidation techniques. Rustavi-2 was partially financially supported, trained, and sometimes protected by USAID and the Eurasia Foundation, which often mobilized public and international support to prevent government interference in the station's reporting. The broadcasts of Rustavi-2 ended up being instrumental in building the opposition and encouraging protest

France, Britain, Italy, Greece, Portugal and most recently Spain have all witnessed scenes of unprecedented disorder.

A growing underclass as the gap between rich and poor widens allied with harsh austerity measures which punish those least responsible yet most vulnerable to the economic collapse have fanned the flames of discontent.

Even Switzerland, despite being one of the most stable and economically vibrant countries in the world, primarily as a result of its refusal to join the Euro, Switzerland is preparing for mass civil unrest in central Europe that could spill over its border, by mobilizing troops to deal with potential disorder.

Youth riots in Britain in 2011, repeated strikes and mass protests in Greece, social unrest in Bulgaria and the riots in Sweden suggest an explosive social and cultural unrest in Europe.

The natures of all the protests happening in Europe have a distinct pattern and nature behind them. The protests, like all the others across the global world are for newer political leadership which will not increase the burden on the citizens of various countries in Europe. The accusation by the population is against corrupt governments and protecting the political class increasing the economic gaps between the rich and the poor.

There was a sudden unrest because the dissemination of information was instant and the people coordinated the protests on simple online platforms. It has increasingly become a challenge for the governments to put a restriction to such unrests and keep them in check as there are multiple information sharing & gathering sources being part of the global economy.

1.5 America as a whole progressing too fast?

North America & South America have been leading the global world solely; United States of America is undoubtedly ruling the global world on the face of free market but dominant on the world like an autocratic ruler. But with the recent financial crisis that seemed to have stemmed primarily by the United States and supported with activities of debt drowned nations of Europe, there is a similar wave of unrest in the nation. The citizens question the role of governments, protest against dire secrecy and a possible uncertainty that has emerged in the minds of the US Citizens, "Whether the information & media access is filtered?" It has been noticed that the government has kept a tight watch on the activities of the citizens to work the nation in favour of growth (as claimed) and as by-product of it, there was no possible way for the citizens to know of the impending disaster that came to know as the "The US Global Financial Crisis".

In a day and age where media reports even the possible predictions, there was a proposed contention that the media is not an independent entity. It communicates the news that is supposed to be transferred from the government to the citizens.

The financial meltdown has unleashed a latent and emergent social crisis across the United States.

What is at stake is the fraudulent confiscation of lifelong savings and pension funds, the appropriation of tax revenues to finance the trillion dollar "bank bailouts", which ultimately serve to line the pockets of the richest people in America.

This economic crisis is in large part the result of financial manipulation and outright fraud to the detriment of entire populations, leading to a renewed wave of corporate bankruptcies, mass unemployment and poverty.

The criminalization of the global financial system, characterized by a "Shadow Banking" network has resulted in the centralization of bank power and an unprecedented concentration of private wealth.

The unrest, revolt and said conflict during the crisis were against curbing information especially regarding the interests of the citizens.

1.6 Conclusion

We are repeatedly noticing that the method in which the protests worldwide are now taking place has support of the tools of the free world which are media and technology. Any restraint put on the transfer of information or ban of access is being termed as curbing the freedom of expression. The protests have been in nature of every country's past and have attempted to overthrow the political class but the nature of protests now aided by media and access to unbounded technology has given emergence to a new behaviour of protest rising from the similar reasons for unrest as the world's history counts.

The governments can no longer ignore the role of this tool of global world, and cannot curb the entire flow of information dissemination. As we have progressed from the start of this paper, we have seen that there is a mass unrest in the world and this has to cater to multiple reasons that have been cited; but these protests and unrests are paving path to a different nature of protest and protesters than seen previously.

The global world citizen is voicing his rights for a free, fairer and better economic, social & political environment around him. This has become a problem for the authorities in charge as because the communication gap between the countries across the world has decreased greatly and a few factor happenings in one part of the part see a greater support from the rest of the world. This will be very challenging as this gap will continue of shrink over time and cannot be controlled by curbing the access to media and information flow. Today, media should be considered a vital component aligning it with the government justifying its means and methods of running a nation. Also, a greater challenge at hand circulates around the fact that unrest in one part of the global world can trigger emotions and similar act in other parts of the world. The global citizen is an informed and active individual in world affairs and no longer remains centred to only his region and country. Additionally, there is increased support by the rest of the world to the conflicting parts of the world through the means of media and greater communication which can prove as a problem to curb the spread of the protests in the conflicting nation and spreading to other global nations as well.

This new world culture supported by unrestricted information flow & media dominance are referred to be growing having both positive and negative implications but nevertheless, growth and evolution is a part of human nature and this pertains to the growth and evolution of the world citizen. A newer age with technology stand imbibed in the nature of the global common man.

The question remains to discuss whether this culture that has evolved is productive or counterproductive for the global world; whether the nations governments do really change the path of national and global growth solely by changing the attitudes.