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Globalization and future of power relations in the Arabic Middle-East: a case study of Egypt and Libya

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In the Arab Middle-East, power relations have been conceived of as unequal, unilateral, and imposing. However, globalization has posed challenges to this absolute and authoritarian political order. More specifically, the process of globalization diminishes governments' domination and absolute power, changes the attitude of subjects and inevitably transforms power relations in the Arab Middle-East. Weakening the control mechanisms and provision of proper facilities and platforms leads eventually to a change in the subjects' attitudes and growth in their awareness. The present paper aims to study the effects of globalization on power relations in the Arab Middle-East, with a focus on Egypt and Libya. The paper argues and concludes that the change in power relations and political order transformation are inevitable.

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Introduction

To experts of international affairs, globalization is a process whereby people are so integrated that events in different parts of the world mutually affect one another. Globalization expands mutual relations beyond governmental level and reduces the importance of geographical borders and intervals (Rosenau, 2005, p. 137). Many thinkers such as Ulrich Beck, Zigmund Bowman, Manuel Castells, and Gianni Vattimo consider this transformation of communications as the starting point of a new era in terms of such concepts as second modernity, liquid modernity, information society, and community.

Globalization cause new developments in different areas of the human life (social, economic, political and so on). It describes processes that compact the world into a unified, global space. Some parts of these processes are social through which geographical constraints overshadowing social and cultural relations are lost, and humans increasingly become aware of this reduction. The other part is related to expanding the scope of activity and influence of political and economic transnational organizations that weaken the authority of governments (Dorosti, 2002, p. 122). Although there are a number of disagreements about the nature, background and dimensions of globalization, it can be said that most of theorists agree about the role of modernity, particularly its economic dimension (capitalism), in expanding new trends. Moreover, the present paper seeks not to be biased toward globalization as a project imposed by Western capitalism, or a natural, historical process which ignores the role of capitalistic powers. Beliefs in numerous globalizations with regard to different influence rate of countries, differences between act and action in this process and also their function differentiation in both real and virtual spaces indicate that each country can enjoy present opportunities and minimize challenges in proportion to its capacity of development and its cognition rate of aspects of this phenomenon (National Center for Globalization, 2014, p. 15). It means that every country and organization must be able to increase its benefits and minimize its challenges, regarding to national and domestic capabilities and international restrictions in realms influenced by globalization. Moreover, they are also affected by such process to survive and achieve their goals, and finally contribute to determining the future direction.

Globalization has considerable and undeniable effects on the nation-states on the international scene in terms of its different dimensions including economy, policy, and culture. Although complete decline of political units seems unlikely in a medium-term future, the quality and extent of countries' abilities to impose their policies on citizens are considerably decreased and undergone a number of change. In many cases, governments have to delegate monopoly decision-making on various issues to transnational or transnational groups and organizations. Moreover, events such as the development of new communicative nets, the familiarity of citizens with different areas such as individual life and political participation, the cultural influence of regions and countries, the emergence of numerous groups such as feminists, environmentalists, proponents of ethnocentrism have led to new loyalties to the associated groups or organizations that weakened loyalty of citizens to their respective governments and resulted to a kind of de-legitimization of authority of the governments. Such evolutions have been happened differently in all regions in the world, but the Middle-East is different and its resistance to globalization is by far greater.

Globalization, a phenomenon resulted from history, is a radical and extensive process in different political, social, and cultural stages that crosses national borders and passes an evolving truth, and compacts time and space and brings them closer together (Lotfi and Mohammadzade, 2010, p. 4). However, governments need to respond to this phenomenon in various ways and

different intensity with regard to structural features of international system, global division of labor, specific features of every nation-state, their formation, ideology, and regions in which they are located. Therefore, globalization has affected the Middle East particularly in political sphere since three decades ago. The USSR collapse and the end of cold war and subsequently the proclamation of a new world order by Georg H.W. Bush toughened up globalization in the Middle East. Because of rising power vacuum in the Middle East after the USSR collapse and Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1990, the ground was prepared more than ever before for the United States and its political, economic and cultural values to enter the Middle East.

Most of theorists in Islamic countries believe that the political model suggested by globalization for the international community including the Middle East is American and western-style democracy rooted in political liberalism and modernity (Ghanbari, 2007, p. 89). Thus, it can be said that most of comments and views about globalization made by Islamic thinkers consider globalization as an import, imposed project of the West and America. The consequence of such views comes to be the change of authoritarian and totalitarian regimes particularly in the Middle East as one of the projects seriously followed by the U.S. According to Huntington, from 1974 to 1990, more than 30 governmental systems in Southern and Eastern Europe, Latin America and East Asia have been transformed from the authoritarian systems into democratic ones. As the leaders of America believe, the liberal-democracy system as the most ideal kind of government feel that it is an American duty to export this political order to the whole world. The U.S justifies its invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan as operations to save the people from the yoke of tyranny and bring them to the shores of freedom and democracy (Ghanbari, 2007, p. 90).

In the Arab Middle East, the dominant logic of power relations has always been based on the imposing, unilateral and unequal relationship between the subjects and those in power. Though there is apparently certain political variety between political systems ranging from royal system to republic and Islamic ones in the region, for most researchers and experts of the Middle East, most of countries of the region have closed, nondemocratic political systems. Even in countries with politically active parties and democratic institutions such as parliament, governors, and governing institutions, the rules of politically democratic performance are not observed. Certain monopoly and oligarchic domination on political systems are the features of the region (Dorosti, 2002, p. 127). In such power relations, most of subjects are prepared to legitimize the rulers' actions, paving the way for the continuation of their power. Therefore, the central question of this paper is: "what effects has globalization had on the power relations in the Arab Middle East, particularly on such countries as Egypt and Libya?" The hypothesis is "by weakening the governments' absolute power and by changing the subjects' attitude, globalization has made the transformation of power relations in Arab Middle-East inevitable." The present paper aims to display that, in addition to restricting governments' capabilities and weakening their power and domination, globalization, by providing proper facilities and platforms, has led to the emergence of modern trend in which subjects seek changes in power relations in the Arab states of the Middle East.

Theoretical framework

Globalization has been defined as the disappearance of the borders dividing the world, and the world's gradual movement towards a kind of further homogeneity in economic, political, social, and cultural scenes, known as a movement from plurality

to unity. The use of the concept dates back to books published in 1970. The first book is *Global Village* written by McLuhan (1989) which concentrates on the role of communication equipment and exchange in the centralized, unified world village. The second book written by Zbigniew Brzezinski is about the role that the US must take over to lead the world and represent a comprehensive model of modernity. With the end of the 2nd millennium AD, mankind is on the verge of a new historical period. Different areas of human biology have been affected by this change, and political, social and cultural formation of communications has been exposed to large changes. Such books as *Passing from Industrial Community to Meta-industrial Community, Transmitting from Modernity to Postmodernity* (Robertson, 2001, p. 20), *Moving from Organized Capitalism to Unorganized Capitalism* (Habermas, 2001, p. 18) and *The End of History and the Last Human* (Fukuyama, 1993, 1413 AH) are among the interpretations used to explain this process and evaluate the results.

Since globalization has different dimensions, any extensive discussion of the concept needs precise, detailed studies that is beyond the scope of this paper. Therefore, the present author focuses on its political dimension.

Globalization is a political process through which social affairs are put in a broader social context, increasingly released from narrow and limited compass of nation-states. In different stages of modern time, the boundaries of society are defined and delimited by the state and political boundaries were more or less aligned with social ones. However, by making national borders permeable, globalization has caused the separation between the society, social and cultural relations, and nation-state (Talebi Arani and Gavili Kilaneh, 2016, p. 102). Today, globalization has entirely changed our understanding of the politics and the nature of interaction between the actors in the political areas. In the traditional view of politics, the state is central, acting as a political actor, and the major attention is paid on the national level of the state activity. In this process, the state is the most important influential factor which affects people's behavior, action and political orientations. But globalization has ended or perhaps destroyed the distinction in domestic spheres. Some have even gone so far that we can speak of the emergence of a "global community." In fact, although nation-states are still playing as an important actor in political stage, the rapid growth of transnational elements and international groups and organizations may deny this claim (Heywood, 2002, p. 125).

In fact, globalization involves changing political organization of societies from national level to international one. Political dimension of globalization includes issues such as the emergence of a global civil society, the increasing attention to common international issues, the increment of the power of international organizations and institutions, the weakening of nation-state's sovereignty, the reduction of state power focus, the development of liberal democracy, and the emergence of new forms of nationalism. According to this perspective in globalization process, internal and external pressures weaken the national governments and bring about a kind of crisis of sovereignty (Piri and Mirzaee, 2017, p. 50). Globalization has also created a contradictory situation by upsetting the political balance and order of societies. According to Held, it also ensures the organization of the relationship between territories and social, economic and political spaces by removing time and space constraints for social interaction patterns and the possibility of new ways of social organization. In other words, as social and political activities and tendencies increasingly extend beyond national territories and borders a direct struggle also culminates against the principle of territory that forms the basis of modern government (Held and McGrew, 2003, p. 8).

In the age of globalization, national issues considered as international problems undermine the sovereignty of the state in

three ways: (1) they redirects individual political priorities, (2) they do not justify the nation-state as problem solver, and (3) they establish new international organizations that cause the state to lose some of its leverage. Although the current political trends are complicated and somehow contradictory, recent evolutions can represent the victory of liberalism, and the trend of national economic strategies to adopt pattern of market-oriented developments continue if it paves the way for international economic cooperation (Piri and Mirzaee, 2017, p. 50). In fact, the role of states in economic policy-making is minimized at the national level and beyond. Today, three important political indicators can be considered for globalization, including the collapse of the totalitarian and authoritarian system, the tendency to democracy and political pluralism, and the respect for human rights. The global movement towards intense convergence between nations in production, distribution, and consumption demands a new economic and cultural policy on a global scale (Pishgahifard, 2001, p. 169). These definitions reflect a challenging phenomenon that, by providing the right facilities and platforms, has prepared the ground for the subjects' growing awareness of their unequal and dominated condition. In addition, it has debilitated the absolute power and domination of the rulers. Such a perception of globalization helps us to analyze power relations in the Arab Middle-East and the need for change.

The Arab Middle-East, logic of domination and continuity of relationship

While power relations are common characteristic of all human societies, it has a special logic in the Arab Middle-East countries, a logic that is domineering, unilateral and imposed. Nevertheless, many subjects as audiences of power contribute to the continuity of the logic of domination by enduring and remaining silent. This case can be seen in Egypt, Libya and Tunisia before the revolution. In such a political-social atmosphere the way of governing is so that there is a very small, controlled space for subjects for any political activity and participation. For example, Muammar Gaddafi, from the 1969 coupe to his overthrow as a result of the civil war in 2011, had one of the longest ruling periods in Libya, characterized by oppression, internal strife, suppression, terror, murder, and looting. In such dominant power relations the feeling of fear and the controlling of the subjects are pervasive comes to be the main reason for the overthrow of the rulers. Such an understanding of power help us to analyze the citizens' obedience, their silence and tolerance to the logic of domination in these Arab Middle East countries. In this regard, the concept of security is needed to study the behavior of subjects in these societies. In the new world, the security of citizens depends on fulfillment of their material or spiritual (emotional) desires and non-violation of their citizenship rights. But what is happening in the Arab Middle-East countries indicates that governments do not commit to ensure the security of citizens against threats. Common threats in these societies are physical threats (death), economic threats (seizure or destruction of property, lack of access to job, resources and facilities), threats to rights (imprisonment, losing civil freedoms), position or situation threats (decreased rank, humiliation in public) and so on. For example, according to article 148 of constitution of the Arab Republic of Egypt, it is one of the president's rights to call emergency state in the country after the approval of the majority of the parliament, and the extension of that law is not allowed without the consent of the parliament. Emergency law, continuously implemented from 1981 after Anwar el-Sadat assassination in Egypt, has made it possible for the government to violate freedoms and human rights, to arrest and detain the opponents of the regime (Masoudniya and Saeedi, 2011, p. 169). In fact, Hosni Mubarak

used emergency law to transfer civilians, Islamists, armed and unarmed, to military courts so that in less than a decade (1992–2000), 1033 people were transferred to these courts, and, among them 92 persons were sentenced to death and 582 to imprisonment (Mazi, 2008, p. 47). Therefore, Hosni Mubarak enjoyed this law for securing the society and the confiscation of freedom and people's right in his favor.

In other words, subjects in the Arab Middle-Eastern countries encounter many threats posed by governments. Moreover, there is a direct correlation between general increase in different kinds of violence and threats felt by the individuals and groups. Galtung describes this violence as “structural violence,” a kind of indirect violence which imposed by social structures and institutions on people to prevent them from accessing their basic needs (Galtung, 2007, p. 106).

In this context, he distinguishes four types of violence in the world of politics which are summarized below: (a) direct violence that is old-fashioned violence that refers to the deliberate creation of pain, such as torture or inhuman, insulting punishments; (b) economic or poverty violence which means deprivation of basic material needs such as shelter, clothing, food and water; (c) political violence or repression which refers to loss of freedom of choosing different opinions, stating them publically, and participating politically; and finally, (d) “alienation”, “identity violence” or “cultural violence” as a kind of structural violence against human identity and his/her intangible needs for solidarity and relationship with others (Miryosefi and Gharibi, 2016, pp. 150–151). For instance, among the Arab Middle East countries particularly those involved revolution or civil war, the level and amount of operation for collecting information and intensifying repressive measures to control the opposition, different tribes and clans has been considered as threat to the security of citizens. Most of citizens have been imprisoned and tortured as political opposition groups who intended to disrupt the stability of regime. Groups recognized as enemy were severely punished. Countless media activists were restricted, deprived of their activities. Many of those who opposed the government are well aware that they would have no access to justice. In most of these countries security is always accompanied with tension, although the government has managed to maintain a minimum of it.

The government's threat to citizens' rights is not limited to the above-mentioned issues. It also includes threats from transfer of power. In the Arab Middle East only a few countries have been able to provide a relatively stable mechanism for the transfer of political power. But in many others there are severe conflicts and violent quarrels among religious-ethnic or racial groups for public office. This naturally poses serious and ongoing threats to subjects and leads to deep crises between the groups claiming power and their supporters who use different types of violence such as assassination, torture and the imprisonment of opponents. In addition, the policy of intimidation and repression in the form of propositions such as maintaining national unity, maintaining independence and territorial integrity, development, fight enemies and so on was a method usually and widely used to manage security and political affairs in most of the Arab Middle East particularly in Ghaddafi's Libya and Hosni Mubarak's Egypt.

Another issue is concerned with political legitimacy and how globalization leads to reducing the loss of legitimacy of authoritarian governments in the Arab Middle East. Legitimacy of governments becomes highly important due to the fact that the continuity and durability of every political regime is directly dependent on the quality and extent of legitimacy of that regime among its subjects. Thus, in order to continue and strengthen the foundation of their government, all political regimes seek to recognize the foundation of their legitimacy and, by supporting it, try to maintain power relations in society. The basis of legitimacy

in the Arab Middle East countries can be considered as a combination of, to use Max Weber's terms, “tradition” and “personal characteristics” of the governor”. Traditional legitimacy is based on a belief in the past traditions and the need to obey leaders who follow traditions. Also person-based legitimacy considers legitimacy as a result of special, praiseworthy sanctity of a character. An example of such legitimization of power can be observed in countries like Egypt, Libya, pre-revolutionary Tunisia, Saudi Arabia, Syria, and Saddam Hussein's Iraq. Traditional legitimacy is based on traditions that are obeyed by governor and subjects. The social basis of traditional domination comes to be the traditional action whereby domination relation is considered as an already determined affair (Bashirye, 2015, p. 60). Although in this type of legitimacy power tends to be personalized, governor cannot ignore basic traditions because otherwise his/her governance would be in jeopardy. Thus, governors derive their legitimacy from traditions (and in the Middle East from Islam). In such societies, governors drive their legitimacy and power from unofficial and transnational sources. For this reason, the obedience of the subjects is not due to the law, but rather subjected to the traditions that are continued and perpetuated by the governors. In these societies elections and parliament either do not exist at all or remain symbolic and formal, and participation in elections is based not on awareness, but on habits. Additionally, the representatives or leaders and their plans are also predetermined. On such occasions, the governors' power and their legitimacy is natural and inviolable. For instance, the government style of Saudi Arabia is highly concentrated, based on tradition. In other words, the texture of power in this country has been formed based on ethnic-tribal traditions. As a royal tradition, “Abdulaziz charter,” named after the first Saudi king, states that the continuation of the monarchy between the brothers is binding. Saudi Arabia's king is chosen from the oldest. Moreover, the royal family has absolute political dominance as there are no political party, parliament and elections in this country. The king is the head of the country, the state, the country's treasury and “Servant of the Holy Shrines.” He has the authority to appoint governors of the four regions of the country and issues official decrees.

In such societies, most of the people become socialized in normative power. They are not connected with world beyond their local and national communities, and regardless of the affairs of the world, dealt with political issues simplistically. By considering their leaders' policies as valid and automatically having a tendency to follow their orders, subjects with primitive analytical skills and emotional participation in different situations are prepared to help maintain power relations in their communication (Rosena, 2005, p. 132). Therefore, the main reasons for subjects' adherence to power relations in the Arab Middle East can be explained as subjects' fear of the consequences of disobedience and their awareness of feeling. However, most of all, following the commands and accepting the relations of domination in these societies are habitual behaviors which is done without thought and evaluation (Rosena, 2005, p. 257). In general, regardless of any reason which has forced the subjects to obey the occasion of domination, the persistence of subjects' attitude leads to legitimacy and maintenance of power relations in the Arab Middle East.

Globalization, weakening the dominant and absolute power of the governors and changing the attitude of the subjects

Globalization has challenged the continuity of dominant power relations. On the one hand, by restricting their capabilities, this phenomenon has threatened the authority and dominance of the governors in the Arab Middle East, and on the other, by supplying proper facilities and platforms it has paved the way for

change in the orientation of citizens towards power. It must be acknowledged that the relationship between the government and the nation (or government and the society) is disproportionate in most Arab countries. This disproportionality, however, is intensified by the developing phenomenon of globalization which leads to crises of identity in these societies (Ashrafnazari and Ghanbari, 2014, p. 169). In fact, since the government holds an absolute grip on the national resources and is not accountable to any law, the authoritarianism of the governors is intensified and society is under their control. This ultimately leads to a gap between the government and society. Thus, if the channels of conveying the people's demands to the government are blocked, the people resort to violence as the only available way. Therefore, in this section of the paper, by adapting an integrated approach based on weakening dominance and absolute power of the governors and changing the attitude of subjects, we seek to analyze the effects of the globalization on power relations in the Arab Middle East, and consequent need for change in these relations. To make this more tangible, we mention some examples of globalization's impacts on the weakening of the governors' dominance and absolute power and the change of subjects' attitude.

From 1990 onwards, under the increasing influence of globalization, some important changes have been taken place in higher education system of the Arab countries. Some of these countries have introduced new strategies to improve performance of higher education system and its relation with social needs. From 1994 to 1996, some laws were enacted in Egypt which had profound effects on higher education of the country. Between 1985 and 1991, a number of registrants increased three-fold by optimizing the student admission system in Egyptian universities. There are some experimental evidences showing an important link between the increase in educated classes, the birth of civil society and the advancement of democratization.

Economic liberalization in Egypt under Mubarak has led to the unwanted by-product of the growth of civil society (Ashrafnazari and Ghanbari, 2014, p. 176). During his presidency, the Mubarak regime sought to make balance between the pressure to reform political system and to create pluralism and flourishing civil society on the one hand, and the fear of handing over of political power to the people or their selected associations on the other hand (Hafeziyan, 2010, p. 40).

That uprisings and revolutions which occurred in Egypt and Tunisia and the success of the protestors to overthrow dictatorship regimes of Bin Ali in Tunisia and Mubarak in Egypt had profound effects on the attitude of Libyan citizens who, using the Internet and cyberspace which were largely out of the governments' control, witnessed the success of protestors in neighboring countries. As a result, their insistence on their demands such as civil liberties and fight against administrative corruption became stronger. Moreover, the growing globalization of issues such as protection of human rights and the principle of responsibility made it impossible for the world community to be indifferent to the obvious violation of human rights in Libya. Regardless of the motives of the United Nations and NATO (i.e. supporting human rights or the personal interests of Western governments), the main goals of overthrowing Gaddafi were to support humanity on the basis of the principle of responsibility and to prevent the apparent violation of peace.

Prior to such a trend in the Arab Middle East, governments as the sole decision-makers in the domestic and foreign areas played important role in maintaining relations of domination. But their role was greatly diminished as they stepped in a new world. The various aspects of the phenomenon of globalization, including economics, politics, and culture, have challenged the traditional sovereignty and legitimacy of those in power in the Arab Middle East, causing its subjects to doubt their adherence to power relations.

Decline of government's control of the economic arteries.

Controlling the economic arteries is the first mechanism whereby governments take control of the citizens in the Arab Middle East, especially in countries like Libya and Egypt. The Arab governments are economically rich. With the exception of the agricultural sector, they act as employers in other areas. Therefore, citizens benefit from the resources, thanks to the government. Hence, corruption and inefficiency of the state systems affect the economy. These governments dominate the country's economy by monitoring the companies of public sector, and in some cases by controlling oil flow and other sectors which are directly dependent on the state treasury. This economic system is known as the "rentier government." The economic impact of such situation can be seen in the government's dependence on rents largely derived from oil as the main source of income for the Arab governments (Ahmadipour et al., 2016, p. 13).

Today, the ability to run the state economy has been encountered serious obstacles put by globalization. In these societies, financial and economic processes are no longer a matter of internal mechanisms and decisions of governors. Currently, domestic economic success means gaining desired position in international markets which increasingly relies on knowledge, information and developed technologies. Such an economy does not necessarily limit itself to rigid framework of unilateral power relations of the third world. It rather tries to draw a new perspective by distancing itself from the state economic limitations. From this perspective, one of the most important traditional levers in power relations increasingly loses its efficiency. Due to the inability of the governors in controlling the economic artery of society and gaining the financial independency of subjects, a new challenge emerges in continuing traditional relationships of authoritarian governors of some of the Arab Middle East countries. Thus, subjects in these countries think that their economic security is not dependent on their restriction to the state economy. Therefore, by joining the private sector, they try to improve their condition.

Today, many economists believe that privatization leads to economic growth, prosperity, political stability, and democracy. Privatization increases efficiency and profitability of economic activities and as a result, the quality of products and services to the public sector are also promoted. Moreover, privatization provides more facilities for the economic sectors and increases productions in the economy (Jones, 2014, p. 1). In the context of the globalization discourse, people come to believe that even Eastern Europe increased its economic efficiency and profitability by the privatization of the state economy. In addition, Asia, Africa, and Latin America have similar experience to benefit from. To them, globalization and privatization have accelerated industrialization and caused telecommunications equipment and information devices spread faster. New developments in the oil-rich countries have increased the number of urban classes and consequently the political importance of these classes. In these countries factors such as the growth of the bureaucracy and the military and the expansion of public educations have created a new middle class. In addition, the Middle Eastern countries are witnessing an increasing number of educated women and youth who challenge the government with their various demands. The middle class increase the public's demands in the military, national and political structures and brings about change of attitude, especially those of women. With rising inflation, high unemployment, and the spread of economic unrest, political and social discontent has rapidly increased within these societies (Ashrafnazari and Ghanbari, 2014, pp. 175–176).

The challenge of ideological and the governor's identity.

Another domination tool used by governor is ideological identity

or governor's identity as one of the prominent aspects of politics in the Arab Middle East which today has been challenged by globalization. Ideological identity has several distinct characteristics: first of all, it is a product of governor's ideology, supported by the existing political system. Second, this identity is identical and does not embrace identity differences and seeks to reject, deny, and, if possible, eliminate different identities, using generalization logic. Finally, while condemning individualism, this identity tries to offer a collective meaning. From this point of view, it is argued that ideologies in the Arab Middle East produce and reproduce their own identity in a unique way as they define it in contrast to other different identities (Bashiriye, 2002, p. 21). Given the undeniable role of ideologies in societies known as the third world and the Arab Middle East, and totalitarian performance of their political system within the identity resulted from dominant ideology, different identities have been isolated and marginalized. Prior to such a trend in the Arab Middle East, especially in countries such as Egypt and Libya, the resistance and opposition forces have been suppressed, and critics and opponents could not seriously damage the credibility and authority of ideological identity. In this regard, the political systems of these societies, whenever faced resistance to their policy of assimilation, do not hesitate to resort to harsh, violent actions, and methods ranging from forced assimilation to repression, to discrimination or even forced displacement and genocide (Samiee Isfahani and Noroozinezhad, 2014, p. 35). But today, with the marching of globalization into a new phase, identities in the Arab Middle East are individualized and continue to live outside the will of the political systems. In other words, benefiting from the facilities and capabilities of new era, marginal identities that have existed outside the mainstream of society have revived and, in opposition to the dominant ideological identity, demanded a return to the mainstream (Moeni, 2005, p. 107). For example, following the uprisings in Egypt, the Egyptians gathered in Cairo's Tahrir Square, inviting millions of protesters to demonstrate against the regime. In one of these demonstrations five hundred people were arrested and sent to government prisons. By publishing declarations in a Facebook page called "We are all Khalid Saeed," Egyptian political activists called on the people and millions of the Egyptians participated in nationwide protests after Friday prayer in the day of anger to protest against poor living conditions and support the continuation of the "Revolution of Anger". Egyptian personalities, groups and different parties, Muslim Brotherhood in particular, took part in the demonstration.

Emergence of new institutions and movements. New social movements are conscious, collective effort or action to make desirable changes or to prevent unfavorable social, economic, political and cultural changes that sometimes use extraterrestrial methods to achieve their goals. In all societies, social movements are manifestation of social and political life which sometimes challenge the permanence of government (Ahmadipour et al., 2016, p. 13). The new intellectual, cultural, and social movements have taken on different dimensions of state independence and sovereignty.

Since 2010 and 2011, when protests and street uprisings started in some of the Arab Middle East countries such as Tunisia, Libya, Egypt and Syria, citizens' libertarian movements were successful in using the Internet and platforms like Facebook and Tweeter in organizing their activities. For instance, many Yemeni active opposition have called for a demonstration via Facebook. No one has a clear idea of the number of people who would accept the invitation, but the result was amazing. Hours before the march, hundreds of young people gathered at Sanaa University Square (www.telegraph.co.uk). The governments of Egypt, Tunisia and

Libya have been overthrown and other countries like Bahrain and Syria faced popular protests and civil wars. The role of ITC technology was so important that the King of Saudi Arabia offered \$150 billion to buy Facebook to distort the media wave of Arabic uprisings and the non-dissemination of this uprising to Saudi Arabia (www.zdnet.com).

The so-called April 6 youth movement comes to be one of the most important manifestations of protest movements formation and direction of protestors by cyberspace and the Internet in relation to the events in Egypt. To support workers of the industrial city "Al-Mahalla Al-Kobra," Ahmed Maher designed Egyptian Facebook page in the spring of 2008 and planned to protest in April 6. Bloggers and reporters used Facebook, Tweeter and websites, and other media tools to report on the strike, warn about police activity, organize legal protection and comment on their measures. Until January 2009, the group had about 70,000 members mostly young and educated. Most of them who were not active in politics were concerned with the "lack of freedom of speech, kinship in government and the country's economic recession" (Ahmadipour et al., 2016, p. 13). The group distributed 20,000 brochures a day before "Friday Rage," which showed the places where the protesters must gather. In addition, they reminded people to publish their information via e-mail instead of Facebook and Tweeter to prevent government interference (www.nytimes.com). In the Libyan revolution social networking and virtual communications played a significant role (www.aljazeera.com). In Libya, Google Earth software was a strategic tool for revolutionaries. The Libyan protestors were able to determine and identify location of military equipment in the city of Misrata by using this software (www.theaustralian.com).

During his rule, Hosni Mubarak severely suppressed civil society. Despite the suppression of the Bar Association, civil society organizations and independent journalists, the religious institutions were immune from government repression. Under such circumstances, they were constantly growing through the network of mosque, and became the main alternative to the Mubarak regime. Politically, the dark and suffocating atmosphere of the Mubarak era laid the groundwork for mobilizing the people and organizing popular movements (Keshazarz et al., 2014, p. 49). The driving force behind the Egyptian revolutionary mobilization was youth movement or university students who were not satisfied with the political, social and economic situation of the country (Al-Madini, 2011, p. 11). While Mubarak regime was based on keeping apart the critical, dangerous classes, these protestors were able to connect the political, social, and economic demands of different sections of society (Ghobanchi, 2011, p. 25). Therefore, a new generation of young people appeared who, far from theorizing and innovating new methods of resisting, took the lead in popular uprisings. To the astonishment of the regime's political elites and opponents, this new revolutionary generation rose from a popular atmosphere which had nothing to do with ideology. This generation was patriotic, without clinging to prejudice and extremism (Shaban, 2011, p. 65).

Furthermore, with the globalization of politics and culture, power relations became more visibly threatened in the Arab Middle East. Emergence of new social institutions and movements such as green, environmental, and feminist movements which define their identity in contrast to the identity endorsed by those in power poses a new challenge to the absolute power. From this point of view, the most obvious aspect of the new world is the acceptance and recognition of identity differences. Globalization, therefore, makes traditional identifications unacceptable in the Arab Middle East, and opened a vista beyond modernity. It distorts the unity of the subject and penetrates all areas of doubt and uncertainty, expanding the realm of social relations and making the social world of individuals look much larger than ever

before. Transparent identities and strong positions have confronted with opaque and mosaic identities and mixed, connected positions, and the state is replaced by the individual in the process of individualization. The eternal, sacred sanctuaries were collapsed, the universal discourses were replaced by sub-discourses and localism and the crisis of originality challenged absolutism (Tajic, 1998, pp. 119–120).

Erosion of legitimizing power. Governance justifications are another tool that facilitates the domination and control of societies in the Arab Middle East. In the Arab Middle East's traditional power relations governance, in theory and practice, gives full sovereignty and freedom of action to the rulers in such a way that the leaders could make decision for the destiny of the people not based on any institution or law but in accordance with their own interests. Globalization, however, challenged this freedom of action because today the sovereignty and legitimacy of a state is closely related to the international community's view of a legitimate government. In fact, states in today's globalized international system need the confirmation and support of the world community, which is itself influenced by global public opinion.

It is through legitimacy that people understand and respect the high position of government. The crisis of legitimacy occurs when the base and credibility of the government are destroyed. In other words, when a small minority supports the government and the majority of people put its legitimacy under question, there is a crisis of legitimacy (Hoffman, 2007, pp. 92–93). In the last decade, traditional patterns of legitimacy in the Arab Middle East has seriously encountered a number of challenges leading to the exposure of vulnerabilities in the political capacities, formation of social movements and outbreak of the crisis of governance in these countries (Ashrafnazari and Ghanbari, 2014, p. 164). Today, any attempt to suppress and contain the challenges ahead through governance justifications becomes exposed at low cost and in a very short time. Even in the most remote parts of the country an eyewitness can easily alert the world to any repressive government action (Bayat, 2011, p. 1). For instance, self-immolation of two young people in Tunisia and Egypt due to the hard, economic pressure and the government's oppression was broadcast all around the world. The events put the two countries on the brink of revolution. Thus, by making the political secrecy almost impossible, globalization has increased the cost of suppressing the opposition and political critics (Greeffeld, 2001, p. 259). In Libya, the same situation was also seen as the protests, started since January 13, and February 17, 2011, became more widespread and gradually turned to a nationwide uprisings and bloody, violent clashes between Libyan government and protestors. Due to media coverage and the revelation of the horrible dimensions of tragedy, the protests gradually drawn to all Libyan cities, leading to urban and inter-urban warfare. Thus, today's authoritarian regimes cannot progress successfully without relying on internal legitimacy based on respect for the rights of citizens and the creation of the right atmosphere for their conscious participation in the process of achieving security and peace to fulfill national interests and goals.

Decline of the state meaningful process. Due to the considerable diversity of media, the monopoly of meaning has encountered a serious obstacle. By challenging the monopoly of meaning, globalization of information has led to multiple and fluid identities in which new meanings and perspectives have drawn the subjects' attention. Globalization of news transmission and communicative media increases the expansion of free access to information and the possibility of raising awareness beyond state-controlled areas, leading to the expansion and deepening of democracy (Kawosi

and Hoseinzadegan, 2011, p. 44). Moreover, the mass media infiltration, by the help of globalization of informational and communicative technologies, has led to the growth of personal or individual cultures and the less effective influence of political generalities on power subordinates which is generally contrary to the tendency and interests of the authoritarian rulers of the Arab states of the Middle East. With the continuation of such effect on citizens and subjects, their worldviews become more divergent and their interpretations of the world get more diverse and different.

Until now, power relations in the Arab Middle East have been based on unilateral perception and exclusive reading in which such concepts as citizens' rights and civil community have particular meaning. In this regard, citizens have duties, not rights. Civil community is considered as a monopolized structure that makes current power relations continue. Therefore, common politics in the Arab Middle East was constructed on disregard for the citizens' legitimate demands, suppression, political repression or the marginalization of different identities. However, globalization of information and emergence of networking community accentuate a new concept in which not only is denial of exclusive meaning emphasized, but also its new interpretation is represented by transcending the national borders. Thus, globalization, by challenging the domination and authority of rulers and their exclusive abilities to exercise unilateral and unequal power, has made any optimistic view about the continuation of the domineering power relations in the Arab Middle East impossible (Ritzer, 2011, p. 67). For example, despite the fact that Egypt has experienced the longest history of modernization in the Arab world, its main problem in the last century has been how to integrate nationalism with Islamism. In addition, the relationship between the state and civil society is unbalanced, inappropriate, underdeveloped and unilateral. The government lacks basic conditions necessary for the spread of democracy and popular participation, and does not feel responsible for society and the people. One of the most important factors in creating a rift between government and civil society is the dictatorial reign rooted in Egyptian political history (Keshazarz et al., 2014, p. 49). In Libya, although globalization paved the way for many tribes and social groups to fight against Gaddafi, this rooted ethnic-tribal identity ties between different classes of society are among many factors that failed to reach a national consensus about the formation of a political regime accepted by all parties more than 8 years of the overthrow of Muammar Gaddafi.

Change of citizens' attitudes and their increasing awareness.

Before the expansion of globalization in the Arab Middle East countries, the subjects are willing to legitimize the rulers' actions and the power relations by mass mobilization or at least by tolerance and silence. But today with the emergence of global information networks and the impact of ideological revolution on all aspects of human life, subjects, by using facilities and platforms, try to strengthen their critical position against common power relations. One of the effects of globalization is the access of power subordinates to information technologies which consequently strengthen their analytical skills. Until now, the subjects in the Arab Middle East are not able to imagine themselves beyond national borders and explain and understand complex global relations. Thus, personal interests equate with national interests and the good behavior of the citizens is interpreted as unquestionable, automatic loyalty to the established authorities (Rosena, 2005, p. 133). However, with the advent of the new world and the increasing use of new information technologies, the subject face a serious challenge as they move away from unconscious obedience to power relations towards questioning the

status quo. Nowadays, by strengthening analytical skills, the subjects, based on the actions they evaluate as appropriate, can determine the legitimacy or illegitimacy of authorities.

The legitimacy resulted from efficiency is another change in the Middle Eastern subjects' attitude. Until a few decades ago, in addition to the criterion of traditional and divine legitimacy in the Arab Middle East, security has been the only concept that the rulers took resort to perpetuate domination and legitimize power relations. However, the subjects emphasize two elements of efficiency and accountability as the most important components of legitimacy. Such a dramatic change can be seen in transition from security to efficiency in the Arab Middle East. New electronic technologies bring all the developments to everyone's attention (Held and McGrew, 2013, p. 48). The influence of the media on changing the criteria of legitimacy in the Arab Middle East is of particular importance. At the outset, public officials may be deemed legitimate by default. But their performance is closely monitored by television cameras and media news. Thus, the authorities need to offer acceptable, reasonable justifications for the continuation of their legitimacy. Otherwise, the subjects seek political change. Therefore, today the legitimacy of power relations is more than the acceptance of concepts such as divine right, ideology and priority. Rather, it is understood in terms of concepts such as efficiency and respect for civil right. As a result, in order to maintain the legitimacy of their power relations, the leaders have to solve the real, palpable problems of the society. Thus, globalization has caused the strengthening of the subjects' critical stance against the rulers as they seriously threaten the domination of governors in the Arab Middle East by realizing their sense of legitimacy in terms of efficiency and accountability.

Regrading the issues mentioned above and based on diminishing of the domination and absolute power of the rulers and the change in attitude of the subjects, the need to change the current power relations in the Arab Middle East seems an undeniable fact. Stepping into a new world, these countries have inadvertently lost their immunity due to a number of new world's requirements. Therefore, globalization, by weakening domination and authority which previously enabled rulers to secure themselves against fundamental change and by changing the subjects' attitudes about relations of domination, has posed fundamental threats to the continuation of the current power relations in the Arab Middle East. From this perspective, the new form of power relations is based on several features. First of all, legitimacy of rulers should be based on efficiency and accountability to subjects. Moreover, rulers, by accepting the necessities of the new world, must restrain their unbridled liberties and move towards fair relations by accepting their subjects, demands, and needs. Based on responsibility and accountability the rulers feel towards the citizens, a new interpretation of citizenship and civil community concept should be proposed which implies the reassurance of citizens and civil society's organizations about peaceful transfer of power. Thus, new relations must be based on the subjects' consent, policy of efficiency, and consensus on power relations.

Conclusion

Due to globalization and revolutions in the field of information and communication technologies, the contacts between different people and groups in different societies have been expanded since the 1990s and the end of the Cold War. The global public opinion as a high-ranking and undeniable observer monitors the actions of leaders and rulers of governments all around the world. It has fundamentally challenged the sovereignty of states through such mechanism of monitoring. Such a process has naturally accompanied with the public awareness of their civil and human rights

all around the world mainly in the Arab Middle East. Citizens' increasing awareness of their rights has led to the recognition of structural backwardness, leading to the expansion of the scope of claims and increasing the demands changes for the improvement of living and working conditions in these communities. The clear examples are unprecedented crises and events in the Arab Middle East countries and northern Africa that bring about challenges ranging from demonstrations and uprisings to revolution and civil war. There is a consensus that principally in non-democratic countries, the more people become aware of the world and their rights and duties, the more they seek changes and reforms. In the other words, globalization and communication development have augmented the public awareness which led to rising against their rulers in the Arab Middle East societies.

Put otherwise, globalization puts pressure on the Middle Eastern countries to change their behavior and functions. Many experts believe that the decline of the domination and sovereignty of states is generally a sign of deepening and expanding the effects of globalization. This belief is drawn from a relatively general assumption that globalization opposes government sovereignty and autonomy. Due to the globalization, human values and rights and political, cultural, and social freedoms are so glorified that their violation on behalf of totalitarian and authoritarian regimes is unjustifiable as it hurts the world's public opinion and conscience. Lack of freedom and marginalization of women, tribes, and minority groups, the continuous repression and irresponsibility countries are the fundamental features of totalitarian governments in the Arab Middle East. In fact, in recent decades the process of globalization has led to the emergence of considerable dynamics in Arab civil society and different groups and parties particularly radical Islamists and seculars. However, the developments over the past decade in some of these countries show that there is a long road to be taken until these groups can form a strong civil society to achieve their goals through peaceful, nonviolent ways.

In conclusion, a new world has emerged, a world which is based on the subjects' access to information, and accompanied with increasing limitations of governors. Power relations in the Arab Middle East have been based on an unequal and imposed relation in which governors have emphasized absolute and unconditional obedience of their citizens. But gradually and by providing proper facilities and platforms, the subjects have increasingly become aware of their position in socio-political texture. Realizing their sense of legitimacy and paying attention to efficiency, welfare, and accountability of governors, they have called for a change in power relations. However, despite the need for changes, what has happened in reality in these countries is the attempt of governors to maintain dominant relations and persist in the absolute obedience of the subjects.

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Competing interests

The author declares no competing interests.

Additional information

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