The Arab Spring: 
What it represents & implications for national security 
(Data from Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon, & Saudi Arabia)

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Overview

• The Arab Spring as a departure from extremism: Non-ideological movements for democracy & economic prosperity
• The Internet as an ideologically-neutral organizing tool
• A shift in people’s political and cultural values
• Who participated in the Arab Spring?
• Westernization, democracy, equality, & economic prosperity
• Interest in Western technology
• Positive implications for national security:
  (1) The Arab Spring’s focus on freedom and democracy counters tendencies toward political violence
  (2) Positive attitudes toward Westernization and Western technology provide a basis for constructive dialog with the Arab public
Data Collection Methods

Face-to-face interviews with nationally-representative samples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Survey Field Period</th>
<th>Sample Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>June – August 2011</td>
<td>3,496</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iraq</td>
<td>January – February 2011</td>
<td>3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lebanon</td>
<td>March – July 2011</td>
<td>3,034</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saudi Arabia</td>
<td>January – February 2011</td>
<td>2,005</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Survey questionnaire available:
http://mevs.org/data/survey-summary/1004
People’s Explanations for the Arab Spring: Movements for democracy & economic prosperity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Egypt</th>
<th>Lebanon</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Freedom &amp; democracy</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic equality &amp; prosperity</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Islamic government</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counter Western influence</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part of a Western conspiracy</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arab unity</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
% Relying on Satellite TV, Internet, or Mobile as Sources of Information

Egypt:
- Satellite TV: 49%
- Internet: 14%
- Mobile: 10%

Iraq:
- Satellite TV: 69%
- Internet: 14%
- Mobile: 28%

Saudi Arabia:
- Satellite TV: 74%
- Internet: 62%
- Mobile: 49%
Trends in values among Egyptians, Iraqis, and Saudis

National Identity

Which one of the following best describes you?

1. I am an Egyptian, Iraqi, Saudi, above all
2. I am a Muslim, above all
3. I am an Arab, above all
4. I am a Kurd, above all
5. Other
Egypt: % Expressing “I am an Egyptian, Muslim, or Arab, above all”

- 81% for Egyptian
- 48% for Muslim
- 2% for Arab

Comparing 2001 and 2011
Iraq: % Expressing “I am Iraqi, above all”

Dec.-2004: 23%
Apr.-2006: 32%
Mar.-2007: 56%
Jul.-2007: 59%
Dec.-2008: 63%
Jan.-2011: 57%
Saudi Arabia: % Expressing “I Am Saudi, Muslim, or Arab, above all”

- Saudi, above all: 17% (2003), 46% (2011)
- Muslim, above all: 75% (2003), 44% (2011)
- Arab, above all: 9% (2003), 8% (2011)
Trends in values
Religion & Politics
Is it very important, important, somewhat important, not important, or not at all important for a good government to
1. Implement only the Shari'a law?
2. Implement only the wishes of the people?
Egyptian Muslims: 
People’s Wishes Versus the Shari’a

- Shari’a law: 48% (2001) vs. 28% (2011)
- Laws according to the people's wishes: 31% (2001) vs. 64% (2011)
Egypt: Which is better in a politician? Strong religious beliefs or strong commitment to national interests (2011)

- 78% for Strong commitment to national interests
- 22% for Strong religious beliefs
Iraq: % Agree that Iraq would be a better place if religion and politics are separated

Dec.-2004: 50%
Apr.-2006: 55%
Oct.-2006: 60%
Dec.-2008: 70%
Jan.-2011: 69%
Saudi Arabia: Decline in support for the Shari’a & in trust of religious institutions

- Shari’a law very important:
  - 2003: 69%
  - 2011: 31%

- Trusting religious institutions a great deal:
  - 2003: 84%
  - 2011: 46%
Egypt: Democracy vs. Strong head of gov’t (% Strongly agree)

**Democratic political system**
- 2001: 68%
- 2008: 79%
- 2011: 84%

**Strong head of government**
- 2001: 2%
- 2008: 9%
- 2011: 5%
Iraq: % Strongly agree that form of government is good

- **Democracy**: 59% (2004), 55% (Apr-06), 53% (2011)
- **Islamic government**: 30% (2004), 22% (Apr-06), 15% (2011)
- **Strong head of government**: 11% (2004), 11% (Apr-06), 12% (2011)
- **Army rule**: 5% (2004), 6% (Apr-06), 7% (2011)
Saudi Arabia: Democracy as the best form of government (% agree)

- 2003: 58%
- 2011: 71%
Trends in values

Attitudes toward gender equality

1. A wife must always obey her husband.
2. Men make better political leaders than women do.
3. University education is more important for boys than it is for girls.
Egyptian Muslims: Increase in support for gender inequality

- Wife must always obey her husband: 47% (2000) to 68% (2011)
- Men make better political leaders: 55% (2000) to 60% (2011)
- University education is more important for boys: 16% (2000) to 21% (2011)
Iraq: Decline in support for gender inequality (% Strongly agree)

- A wife should always obey her husband:
  - 2004: 64%
  - 2006: 63%
  - 2011: 42%

- Men make better political leaders:
  - 2004: 71%
  - 2006: 69%
  - 2011: 33%

- University education is more important for boys:
  - 2004: 29%
  - 2006: 25%
  - 2011: 8%
Saudi Arabia: Decline in support for gender inequality (% Strongly agree)

- Men make better political leaders: 53% in 2003, 44% in 2011
- A wife must always obey her husband: 61% in 2003, 44% in 2011
Egyptian Muslims: Correlates of protest participations (Correlation coefficients)

- Employed: .14
- Young/Single: .25
- Male: .15
- Urban: .17
- Internet reliance: .16
- Mosque/Church attendance: .25
- Free will vs. fate: .11
- American as neighbors: .20
- Stealing immoral: .13
- Violence immoral: .18
- Religion: .11
Egypt: Increased Westernization is tied to increased gender equality, democracy, and overall standard of living.

- Equality between women & men: 90%
- Democracy: 93%
- The overall standard of living: 95%
COUNTRY Would Be Better with Technology of the West (2011)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iraq</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lebanon</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saudi Arabia</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Summary

1. Increase in national identity
2. Decline in support for the shari’a
3. Increase in gender equality (except in Egypt)
4. Positive implications for national security:
   (1) The Arab Spring’s focus on freedom and democracy counters tendencies toward political violence
   (2) Positive attitudes toward Westernization and Western technology provide a basis for constructive dialog with the Arab public