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Influence of Social Media in Stages of Democratization

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INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN

STAGES OF DEMOCRATIZATION

By

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Bachelor of Science in Political Science

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the

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Abstract

The Internet and social media have become a pervasive part of our global

environment over the last few decades, utilized primarily for commerce, communication,

and entertainment. The last several years, however, have seen an increase in the

application of social media in political discourse and activities, primarily in developed

democracies and autocracies. Does that mean social media can influence democratic

transition and consolidation in the 21st century? Are the examples of the Green

Movement in 2009 and the Arab Spring in 2011 a validation of social media in service to

democracy, or is social media also a tool for surveillance and disruption by autocratic

states? This paper examines, through case selections of four countries, the use of social

media during protests in Iran and Egypt, and the use of social media as possible

instruments of democratic consolidation in Nepal and South Africa.

Acknowledgements

This has been a particularly long journey for me, both in distance and time. I received my Bachelor of Arts degree with a major in political science from the University of California, Los Angeles on September 10, 1971. Decades later, I decided to revisit and formalize my interest in political science and enroll in an academic institution in the city I have lived in for more than 30 years. I wanted the challenge of expanding my knowledge and mind in a structured environment.

I want to acknowledge the help and guidance I received from Chris Hudgins, Dean of the College of Liberal Arts, and John Tuman, Chair of the Political Science Department, when I first decided to take a nondegree seeking class from the department. Dr. Dennis Pirages was one of the professors who taught my first class and I am indebted to him for his suggestions and encouragement. After taking another class with Dr. Pirages, I decided to formally apply for the master's program and was accepted.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

There is general acceptance that the Internet and social media play an integral part in today's global communications and commerce, but what about the influence on the political process in countries experiencing democratic transition or consolidation? This thesis looks at the use of social media in political protests and mobilization in autocratic countries and its potential for use in governance and consolidation in emerging democracies.

There is established utilization, particularly in developed countries, both democratic and autocratic, of this new media in "pop" culture and entertainment. Mass media organizations have recognized the importance of social media, incorporating it in their presentations and structure. In many cases, they create a false dialogue with viewers, listeners and readers ("join the conversation"), while controlling the overall narrative, whether it is drama or news. The use of Skype, YouTube and other applications of social media in national and local televised news reports for interviews of newsmakers and videos of news events globally confirm its complementary technical role.

The digital divide, normally ascribed to those who have access to the Internet and social media and those who do not, could also be used to describe the difference between democratic and autocratic nations in their approach to, and control of, access and content.

Penetration and use of social media depend on several factors including density of population and economic development. As noted above, both democracies and autocracies utilize the Internet for commerce. For uses other than commerce, restrictions

of content and continuity depend on the nature of individual regimes. In the realm of politics, social media has been utilized by political parties in established democracies to fund raise, energize the base, create lists of voters for targeted e-missives and provide another channel of message distribution. (Balz, Washington Post, July 28, 2013) It has become accepted as a part of the modern political landscape. If, according to Thomas Friedman, the world is flat (Friedman 2006), global commerce and social media appear to have contributed both to the flattening of it and the facilitation of communications across it. In the last two decades, globalization and the concomitant growth of social media have not only seemingly flattened the world, but possibly opened the door to a fourth wave of democratization.

The third wave of democratization followed the collapse of the Soviet Union and offered the potential of a unipolar world, led by the United States, advancing towards liberal democratic governance or neoliberalism. The possible fourth wave, a consequence of accelerated globalization, was least expected to occur in the Middle East. It played out, however, most dramatically in the Green Movement of Iran and in the Arab Spring in the Middle East. (Khiabany 61)

In the beginning of the 21st century, the region became the focal point for movement away from autocratic governance. In Iran, protesters took to the streets in 2009 to challenge the reelection of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. In Tunisia, President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali stepped down on January 14, 2011, ten days after protests inspired by the death of Mohamed Bouazizi, a 26-year old Tunisian street vendor. Ben Ali had been in power for 23 years. In Egypt, President Hosni Mubarak, despite ruling autocratically for 30 years, was ousted through protests that lasted 18 days.

On February 11, 2011, his resignation was announced. In the cases of Tunisia and Egypt, an autocrat was displaced, but not the system itself. In the case of Iran, the re-elected Ahmadinejad stayed in power with the backing of the regime. In these three cases, social media played a part in the process, but the outcomes were different. There is some dispute in the literature, however, about the effectiveness and pervasiveness of social media in the Green Movement in Iran and in the Arab Spring.

What part did social media play in this democratic or anti-authoritarian trend? A review of the readings suggests social media informed both the local population and the international community as to the scope of the protests and contributed to the communication and mobilization of protesters. Did it, however, make a significant contribution? There is some dispute as to the effectiveness of social media, once numbers of users, social media penetration, and counter-measures by authorities are considered. For example, based on 2009 estimates by the International Telecommunications Union, the percent of the population using the Internet in Egypt was 24% and in Iran was 11%. (Kavanaugh et al. 2011, 2) "In Egypt, only 5% of the population uses Facebook, and in Iran, the government blocks the site, although many Iranians are able to use proxies." (Kavanaugh et al. 2011, 2) An additional consideration: The difference between the production and consumption of online and social media content. (Aday et al. 2013, 2)

This thesis looks at the influence of social media on stages of democratization, both from the communications and mobilization perspective of authoritarian regimes, and from the transition and consolidation perspective of emerging democratic regimes. The comparative method will be outlined, followed by an overview of the theoretical framework of modernization, democratization, democratic transition and consolidation.

Four case selections (Iran, Egypt, Nepal and South Africa) will allow a varied view of the

introduction of social media into the political process. Social media terms are used from

the perspective of software (i.e. online services or applications) and hardware (i.e. cell

phones, smart phones and other devices). This paper will offer a view of social media that

attests to its transformative nature in varied political environments.

Chapter 2

Methodology

There are a number of approaches one could take on the subject of social media and its influence on stages of democratization. There is a large body of literature on democratization and a growing amount of social media literature as well. The challenge is to focus a view on the interaction of these two subjects in a given time and structure. This narrow view can possibly illuminate the influence of a technology that transforms at dazzling speed on one of the world's oldest political concepts.

The comparative method is utilized in this paper, looking at four countries from 2003 to 2013. The relatively short time span is based on the generally accepted widespread introduction of social media in the form of MySpace in 2003. As social media expanded through the years, Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube, for example, became more popular than MySpace, enlarging its capacity for interactive communication and the potential for mobilization.

How were the four countries chosen? This paper's intent is to examine countries that could represent predominant aspects of the current state of social media and democracy. The Islamic Republic of Iran and the Arab Republic of Egypt signify the significant contemporary application of social media in a region of protest and possible democratic transition. Iran has a relatively short modern history of a theocracy with a Supreme Leader and dominant clerics in charge (with some democratic elements, such as a parliament), succeeding the reign of the Shah in 1979. Iran, both in the past and in its current state, is a regional power that also has influence in energy security. That influence

is due to its reserves of natural gas and petroleum. The strategic location and importance of Iran, the protests generated by perceived vote fraud, the use of social media for communication and mobilization during the protests, and the counter measures of the state when faced with demonstrators and technology, demonstrated in its totality, a need for inclusion in the thesis.

Egypt, one of the key Arabic-speaking countries in the region, has a modern history filled with nationalism, pan-Arabism and authoritarianism. Hosni Mubarak, who became the fourth president of Egypt, assumed power after the assassination of Anwar Sadat. He was an authoritarian leader who was unlucky enough to be in power when a wave of protests began. While not focused, as in Iran, on a disputed election result, the protests were more generally aimed at legal, political and economic issues. In an area of the world that was assumed to be bereft of democratic impulses, the protests of Egyptians and demands for reform resonated around the world. Part of that resonance was due to the use of, and perceived reach of, social media, which is why it was compelling to include Egypt in this paper.

Both Iran and Egypt are examples of protest communication and mobilization where social media was employed to further those ends. The case selection of Nepal and South Africa is based on the potential utilization of social media for democratic consolidation.

The Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal was included due to its circuitous transition to democracy, an embryonic Internet infrastructure and emergent social media and a low literacy rate. There was civil strife through the 1990s until 2008, when a peace treaty was signed and elections were held, ousting the monarchy and electing a

Constituent Assembly. Nepal became a federal republic upon an historical vote in June of 2008 ousting the monarchy in favor of the constituent assembly. Nepal voted to oust the monarchy in June 2008. Nepal was formally renamed the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal when it became a federal republic. Nepal has its challenges maintaining a democratic state, given domestic opposition, threats against journalists, government use of force, and directives to Internet service providers (ISPs) regarding filtering of some content.

Although literacy rates were not one of the indicators examined, it does offer a descriptive difference from the other case studies. While Nepal is not a major power nor large state, while it does provide scarce resources to the world, and while it does not have an impact on the development of global technology, it does provide another view of how citizen and political utilization of social media can contribute to democratic consolidation in a country that has a diversity of ethnic and linguistic groups. The study of social media and democratic consolidation should not be limited to large, powerful and important countries. It is the concept that is important, regardless of external considerations.

The Republic of South Africa was examined for its democratic transition from an apartheid state, its regional influence and its current record of elections under universal adult suffrage. Given it unique and notorious history on the continent of Africa, it serves as an example of the hard work of democratic transition and the potential of social media's impact on democratic consolidation. It has a mixed economy that is the second largest in Africa. With the death of Nelson Mandela in 2013, the ruling African National Congress' (ANC) single-party dominance yielded to a more competitive electoral terrain. The expanded political field allows for consideration of social media use by all of the

other political parties. Despite the opening of the political arena, there were some

negative aspects in 2013, including governmental restrictions on political events,

President Jacob Zuma embroiled in a scandal involving state funds, and challenges in the

mining sector between the ANC-affiliated National Union of Mineworkers and the

Association of Mineworkers and Construction Union. Despite the challenges, South

Africa remains a study in democratic transition and consolidation.

Iran, Egypt, Nepal and South Africa are examined using four indicators, three

provided by the World Bank and one by Freedom House. The World Bank indicators

include Internet users (per 100 people), fixed broadband Internet subscribers (per 100

people), and mobile cellular subscriptions (per 100 people). The Freedom House scores

are a representation of levels of freedom in each country. The indicators are discussed in

each country's chapter.

The data from the World Bank was obtained through the International

Telecommunication Union, World Telecommunication/ICT Development Report and

database, and World Bank estimates. The indicators are defined thusly: Internet users are

defined as people with access to the worldwide network; fixed broadband Internet

subscribers are the number of broadband subscribers with a digital subscriber line, cable

modem, or other high-speed technology; and mobile cellular telephone subscriptions are

subscriptions to a public mobile telephone service using cellular technology, which

provide access to the public switched telephone network. Post-paid and prepaid

subscriptions are included.

Freedom House's "Freedom in the World" is an annual global report on political

rights and civil liberties. Its scores are obtained and reported in a more narrative manner

than the numbers reflected in the World Bank data. The "Freedom in the World" Report (2003-2014) derives its methodology primarily from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948. These standards are applied globally, despite differences in economic development or geographic location or ethnic configuration. They are also based on real-world conditions, not government structure or written laws. One is that, "Countries and territories with small populations are not penalized for lacking pluralism in the political system or civil society if these limitations are determined to be a function of size and not overt restrictions by the government or other powerful actors." (Freedom House)

Throughout this paper, the difference between the utilization of social media and the consumption of social media content is emphasized. Internal consumption of media content in each country should be a factor in any analysis. Exogenous consumption of social media content may be a factor as well. Facilitated by the diaspora of each nation, it could help shape perceptions and may have an influence on an autocratic regime in transition or a democratic government that is on the path to consolidation. On the other hand, as noted below in the chapter on Iran, external pressure may have little or no effect.

While social media has a place in democratic transition and consolidation, and those contentions are addressed in the case selections, it is also clear that the march of technology occurs despite the political structure or challenges to that structure in any part of the world. That is a bigger picture for others to address.

Chapter 3

Modernization, Democratization and Social Media

Modernization theory helps frame the approach of this paper by representing a longer arc of history than social media, yet supporting the understanding of the impact of this 21st century phenomenon. A review of the literature helps lay the groundwork for a wider look at the influence of social media in stages of democratization in the 21st century.

There are many studied, observed and measured determinants of democratization throughout human history. The focus here is on social media, which is a new dynamic influence on the democratic continuum. Through the lens of modernization theory, the impact of social media can first be demonstrated in the economic sphere. The Internet and social media have played an important part in the economic development of most nations, allowing for wealth to increase through transactions for goods and services, creation of intellectual property, and transmission of entertainment, education, culture and interactive communication.

While there is a dispute in the literature over whether economic development encourages or leads to democratization, or whether it helps to prevent a democracy from sliding back to autocracy, this paper looks at the potential of social media for political activities, including communication and mobilization. It exams the possibility of social media contributions to democratic transition and consolidation.

The economic utilization and social connectivity of social media has been established, but can modernization theory incorporate the added political dimension of social media in democratic transition and consolidation? That is the question this thesis

looks at through an examination of two recent protests in Iran and Egypt and two case selections of emerging democracies.

While it appears that social media can increase participation in political protests through the "contagion effect," (Schattschneider 1960, 2) and increase awareness of those protests through global communications, it is but one step on the road to democratic transition and consolidation. It is, however an important step, as it can reflect democratic ideals. Ironically, many democratic ideals are concepts that encourage mobilization. "Universal ideas in the culture, ideas concerning equality, consistency, equal protection of the laws, justice, liberty, freedom of movement, freedom of speech and association tend to socialize conflict. These conflicts tend to make conflict contagious; they invite outside intervention in conflict and form the basis of appeals to public authority for the redress of private grievances." (Schattschneider 1960, 7). This is a new intersection of democracy, modernization and social media.

One of the prominent proponents of modernization theory, Seymour Martin Lipset (Lipset 1959), looks at two aspects of stable democracies: economic development and legitimacy. His focus is on the conditions that support a democratic system, not the internal mechanisms that provide the rules of the political game. (72) It is a structural approach to democracy, incorporating such elements of modernization as education, income levels, industrialization and urbanization.

He was also aware that definitions of democracy would not apply equally to all nations. Lipset examines Europe, for example, in a different context than Latin America. From his perspective, workers' integration into the body politic was settled in Europe and North America, but not resolved in Latin America. His contention is that a stable

democracy requires "moderate tension" between contending political forces and he was a proponent of a two-party democratic system, but recognizes social conditions that create the need for multi-party contestation. (99)

Lipset also believes in the power of multiple sources of cleavage, e.g. class, religion and regional interests. Federalism, as a structure, encouraged these cleavages. Modernization, from Lipset's view, requires education and economic development to sustain democracy. It cannot, in and of itself, create democracy.

Authors Adam Przeworski and Fernando Limongi (Przeworski and Limongi 1997) look at democracy and modernization from the narrow focus of development, excluding factors such as religion. They examine Lipset's view of development and democracy, and conclude that effect of income levels determines the destiny of established democracies, that democracies are more likely to expire in poor countries and survive in wealthy ones. The authors challenge Lipset's contention that rapid development creates unstable democracies. "What destabilizes regimes are economic crises, and democracies, particularly poor democracies, are extremely vulnerable to bad economic performance." (169) They conclude that, unlike Lipset, democracy requires action by political actors and is not brought into being by structural changes.

There are challenges to Przeworski and Limongi, and support for Lipset in the context of economic development preceding a democratic system. A study in 2006, using new data and techniques and a three-way classification of regimes (including partial democracies), confirms Lipset's hypothesis. (Epstein et al. 2006) The authors conclude that the third category, partial democracies, is ripe for future study and for policy considerations. As countries reform both politically and economically, their leaders will

have to decide whether to pursue both reforms simultaneously or sequentially. If

sequentially, the decision has to be made to put economic reform first or political reform

first.

Jan Teorell looks at modernization and democracy and notes the easy conclusion

that could be reached about economic prosperity linked with democracy. (Teorell 2010)

The author also points out that there are clear exceptions to this connection, citing the oil-

rich autocrats in the Middle East. Teorell "…finds statistical support for four economic

determinants of democratization: the level of socioeconomic modernization, short-term

economic growth, oil abundance, and freedom from state incursion in the economy." 54)

Economic crises have implications for autocratic regimes, and citing Haggard and

Kaufman (1995), O'Donnell and Schmitter (1986) and Przeworski, the author notes that

such crises cause splits within the elites. He also concludes that media proliferation can

hinder the formation of coups. The proliferation of social media may play a part in the

opposite argument, the promotion of democracy, as discussed in this paper.

Michael K. Miller, in a study of 167 nations from 1875-2004 (Miller 2012)

demonstrates a seemingly paradoxical result of adding a third element to the mix of

economic development and democratic change: violent leader removal. His theory: While

development reduces the likelihood of violent leader removal, it makes democratization

more likely in the aftermath. "It is an intriguing paradox that democracy is inherently

peaceful, but violence is not only compatible with democratization -- it is an essential

component of democratic development over the last 135 years." (1017)

Carles Boix looks at democracy and development through a data panel, from early

nineteenth century to the end of the twentieth century, and concludes that development

has a causal effect on democracy, that "…per capita income is statistically associated with the process of democratization…" (Boix 2011,827) and there is variation in the relationship between income levels and time periods.

While modernization is but one determinant of democracy, other approaches include the study of social and cultural determinants, international factors, regime types (including hybrid regimes), institutional arrangements, party systems, and elections. Once a democracy is formed and consolidated there is the consideration and study of its effect on decisions of war and peace, social and economic choices.

This paper contemplates the influence of social media in the context of democratic transition, and it does so with the understanding that prior works did not anticipate this particular form of technology serving as either an impediment or accelerant to the process. Such concepts as elite bargaining, foreign aid, military-to-civilian alteration, and economic crises are part of the larger transition literature. Could social media, given its reach endogenously and exogenously, now be considered as part of the larger discussion and theories of democratic transition?

Democratization in any nation can generally be defined, conceptualized, measured and analyzed from a variety of perspectives. These perspectives tend to focus on the history of a country, i.e. its authoritarian past, its economic development, its transition into some form of democracy, its legitimacy at a basic level (free and fair elections, competitive parties, etc.), and its progress towards consolidation. There is also the role of exogenous forces and factors in influencing democratization in a particular country.

Jan Teorell (2010) looks at international factors in the third wave by creating a model that measures three levels of democracy at three stages: globally, among countries belonging to the same region, and neighboring countries. He views three exogenous forces at work: international trade, neighbor diffusion and pressure from regional international organizations. His conclusions find that trade volume has a negative impact, but neighbor diffusion and membership in democratic regional organizations have a positive impact.

Steven Levitsky and Lucan A. Way examine potential exogenous influence, adopted by countries after the end of the Cold War. (2005) The challenge to authoritarian regimes by the third wave led several to adopt the mantle of democracy. These competitive authoritarian regimes were, in many cases, initially viewed as "in transition" to democracy. Western leverage, defined as …"governments' vulnerability to external pressure…" as well as "linkage to the West (the density of a country's ties to the United States, the European Union, and Western-led multilateral institutions)…" (21) became the two independent variables utilized to study democratization. The authors posit that leverage and linkage offers the best change for democratization, but the narrow focus on elections is not just insufficient for monitoring, analyzing and taking possible action to "leverage" democratization. It speaks to a black-and-white view that seems to be particular to the Western world.

Paul J. Zak and Yi Feng (2003) argue that transitions to democracy occur either during economic growth or contraction, with the "middle class" the impetus for change. The speed of such transitions are governed by "…inequality, the planning horizon of the autocrat, the autocrat's perceived legitimacy, and the rate of economic growth. (1) Their

theory's focus on the "middle class" as the deciding factor in transition or in changes in support for a government is consistent with much of the literature on transition.

Democratic consolidation is a term that has many meanings. For purposes of this thesis, the term refers to two "classical" categories as outlined by Andreas Schedler (Schedler 1998). One is the concept of "…reaching the goal of democratic continuity, maintenance, entrenchment, survival, permanence, endurance, persistence, resilience, viability, sustainability, or irreversibility." (95) The other concept is negative, but crucial to democracy, i.e. moving away from fragility of the political system. The negative view is aimed at keeping democracy alive, free from attempted coups or other challenges.

Social media, while a relatively new variable in the political world, is utilized in both autocratic and democratic societies. One can look at social media as both an extension of traditional media, with its gatekeeper function and its control by elites in many countries, and as a separate means of communication, with its own rules. Where traditional media is a few-to-many concept, social media enables the many to communicate among themselves on a global level. Balkin connected this aspect of social media with democracy. "Democratic culture is about individual liberty as well as collective self-governance; it concerns each individual's ability to participate in the production and distribution of culture." (Balkin 2004, 2) It is Balkin's contention that informational capital is the battleground for social media, and that democratic culture must extend to the designing of infrastructure that maximizes expression. The author recognizes that social media can be a two-edge sword, sharp for democracy and equally sharp for surveillance and control by the state.

While this paper looks at social media's influence on stages of democracy, Balkin posits that democratic values must have an influence on social media. The unique ability of social media to lower the costs of transmission and reception and allow copying, editing and annotating images and copy are what the author would consider part of the democratic discourse. "Speech becomes democratized because technologies of distribution and transmission are put in the hands of an increasing number of people and increasingly diverse segments of society throughout the planet." (8) The rise of social media can be considered a digital revolution and, like many revolutions, create both confusion and opportunity.

Confusion and opportunity offered themselves as the Green Movement played out in 2009 along with the Arab Spring in 2011. Here, social media appears to have had an effect in the potential of democratic transition. Both countries, clearly non-democratic, were flash points for democratic demands. It was a novel moment, where both elites and non-elites had access to social media; there was a balance of communication and a counter balance of surveillance and blocking of communication.

Before considering the ramifications of social media use in the Green Movement and the Arab Spring, and an examination of two case selections of emerging democracies, a look at democratic transition and consolidation will help to define the scope of this thesis.

Chapter 4

Democratic Transition and Consolidation

Beyond the mechanics and technical aspects of social media in terms of communication and mobilization, there is a larger question to consider. Given its unique ability to interconnect on a global scale, and with a low barrier to utilization, can social media play a role in regime transformation, and/or transition to and consolidation of democratic governance? Kahn and Kellner address this question in their work. "The global Internet, then, is creating the base and the basis for an unparalleled worldwide anti-war/pro-peace and social justice movement during a time of terrorism, war, and intense political struggle." (Kahn and Kellner 2004, 88) The case for social media and emerging democracies could be considered the classic case of the cart before the horse. Technology, as noted, is available on a global scale, both in authoritarian regimes and democratic governments. If a nation is undergoing a democratic transition and the technical tools are in place (though Internet penetration rates may vary from country to country), the challenge is to use those tools to further democratic aims in ways that may not even be necessary in established democratic countries. Developed countries may not require a "call to arms" for challenging democratic backsliding or promoting a "progressive" agenda, given the institutions in place.

This concept of a two (or more) way street of communication and mobilization may hold the possibility of encouraging the potential of democratic transition and consolidation, since large groups of citizens can express their opinions and preferences in real time. But, there is a difference between Internet and social media penetration, and the

use thereof. "…Internet use, but not Internet penetration, is associated with greater citizen commitment to democratic governance." (Nisbet, Stoycheff, and Pearce 249). In other words, if you have the tools and fail to use them, there may be no change towards democracy. That is what some call the digital divide or simply the unwillingness of a segment of any population to adopt technology in the interest of democratic furtherance. It is possible a majority of citizens may not wish to participate in democratic transition or governance. And, while protests incorporating social media can be organized and dispersed with no apparent leadership, building democracy generally requires leadership and/or the structure of political parties.

Social media can provide an ongoing, interactive and pervasive channel, but someone (a leader) or something (a political party) must spearhead the transition and governance. Just as in the case of the Egyptian experience in chapter six, there must be "feet on the ground" to effect and maintain concrete results.

Could there be a governing model of social media that could produce a democratic result and a theoretical framework for social media tools to assist democratic transition and governance? The challenge would be to balance such a model of "social media governance" against a developing democratic government that also has access to countermeasures of blocking, neutralizing and/or surveilling social media. It would not be surprising to citizens living under some form of democracy to discover the reality that democratic governments also have the ability and can demonstrate the willingness to put restrictions or surveillance on social media. A study of Internet censorship and established democracies (Dick 2012) shows that democracies, through legislative and technical mechanisms, have mimicked authoritarian regimes. (Dick 260)

With or without a governing model, social media can serve as a corrective balance to traditional media, operating as a channel for timely corrections of a misstatement or error in fact by a conventional journalist. This process may further the ends of democratization, providing an outlet to establishment or state media. For example, during the Egyptian protests against President Hosni Mubarak's regime, there were mainstream media reports in the United States that credited nonviolence strategist Gene Sharp as one of the leaders. Those reports were confronted by social media users in Egypt. The New York Times was taunted by some Twitter users with the hashtag #GeneSharpTaughtMe. (York 2011, 50)

From another perspective, with or without a governing model, social media may have the opposite effect on democratic mores, becoming instead an instrument of silencing debate in the public sphere. This silencing would not come from the traditional consideration of state surveillance, tracking and blocking, but from what could be considered peer pressure. According to a report published by the Pew Research Center, "It makes people less likely to voice opinions, particularly when they think their views differ from those of their friends…." (Miller 2014)

Marshall McLuhan (McLuhan 1994) posits that the medium is the message. He contends that it is not content per se that could affect people, but the medium that provided the content that could shape attitudes in society. Is social media the message? It does shape society in many ways, including 24/7 connectedness and the distractions of emails and texts. But, can it separate from mass media and represent a democratic distinction with a difference? China, for example, has created Renren, Weibo, and Youku to take the place of Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube, respectively. If authoritarian

governments have the ability to monopolize the virtual sphere, there is less chance for a transition to democracy; if democratic governments control some of that sphere as well, there is less chance for democratic consolidation.

The challenge for emerging democracies, as well as established democracies, is to recognize social media as a tool for expression and mobilization by citizens. It is a tool that may be somewhat regulated, but necessarily integrated into democratic governance. It is not an easy challenge as both democracies and autocracies deal with their own notions of state security and control.

A report by Freedom House, "Freedom On The Net" 2013, notes that "…global Internet freedom has been in decline for the three consecutive years tracked by this project, and the threats are becoming more widespread." (Kelly et al. 1) According to the Freedom House report, there are ten forms of control used by governments: blocking and filtering; cyber-attacks against regime critics; passing new laws and generating arrests for political, religious, or social speech online; paying government commentators to manipulate online discussions; physical attacks and murder; surveillance; takedown requests and forced deletion of content; blanket blocking of social media and other information and communications technology (ICT) platforms; holding intermediaries liable; and throttling or shutting down Internet and mobile services. (Kelly et al. 3-7) The issue, then, seems to be one of two ships passing in the night. One ship is the democratic trend enhanced with social media tools; the other, the increasing sophistication of tools used by states to monitor and disrupt citizen activism.

The Freedom House report, while noting the increasing controls by states, also remarks on the increase in citizen online activism. "In 11 countries, negative laws were

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deterred as a result of civic mobilization and pressure by activists, lawyers, the business sector, reform-minded politicians, and the international community." (12) The increase in citizen online activism demonstrates that individuals and civic groups can utilize these implements despite state impediment. The negative developments still outweighed the positive ones for 2013, but examples outlined in the report show some hope for progress, especially in cases where the judiciary plays a role (at least within democratic regimes).

The case can be made that social media is a two-way street, or stated more elegantly, part of a continuum that ranges from a democratic tool, used by individuals or groups, to a surveillance tool used by the state. There is another use of social media, which has been effectively used in recent months by the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS), i.e. in spreading terror by posting online propaganda videos of villages being overrun, fiery rhetoric by spokespeople and grizzly videos of beheadings. "In addition to launching their own websites, terrorists can harness the interactive capabilities of chatrooms, instant messenger, blogs, video-sharing websites, self-determined online communities and social networks." (Weimann 2010, 46) Social media can also be effectively used by terrorists to recruit and organize attacks around the world, using, in addition to Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube, Google Earth for logistical planning purposes. The ISIS example is not the first use of social media for terror through propaganda and/or operations, just the latest.

The influence of social media in new and established democracies can be limited by Internet penetration, social development, degree of democracy, etc. It is also limited by the architecture of social media itself. Facebook, Twitter and other platforms have user agreements that can encourage democratic dialogue and mobilization, but can also

narrow the range of communication options. Usability is key to social media as its structure and regulations enable or disable that usage. (Youmans and York 2012, 316) Those structures and regulations are still evolving. One possible alternative…civic technologies, proposed by Jonathan Zittrain, (325) such as Wikipedia, which are not constrained by governmental or commercial gatekeepers.

There are studies that compare the Internet and social media's impact on society, but few that quantitatively look at the impact of global social media on democratization, especially in new or emerging democracies. One study by Victoria Stodden and Patrick Meier looks at new communication technology and democratic tendency through empirical evaluation and asks the question: "Does the globalization of the Internet have a democratizing effect"? The study is two-fold, laying out definitions of democracy with a literature review comparing and contrasting the two schools of thought. The first school is the populist school of thought that looks to the Internet as a liberating tool. Included in that school are Dahl, Best and Wade, Rheingold, Grossman, Barber, Snider among others. The other school views the Internet as "…an extension of the ruling class and centralized control." Included in that school are Barber, Bimber, Lippmann, Page, Goldsmith, De Mesquita, and Downs. (Stodden and Meier 2009) To synthesize the multiple approaches to defining democracy, the authors use three perception-based measures of governance from the World Bank indicators for their dependent variables: Voice and Accountability (VA) for political participation and democratic freedoms; Rule of Law (RL) encompassing the value of the police and the courts, and the prospect of crime and violence; and Political Stability and Absence of Violence (PS), the likelihood of regime destabilization or removal by violent and/or illegitimate means. (2)

Stodden and Meir's study draws data from the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) from 2000-2006, a relatively recent time period compared to other studies, given that both Internet access and cell phone use are more widespread than studies that were conducted in the 1990s. The authors use data from both the Internet and cell phone data per 100 inhabitants in 181 countries. Regression analysis is employed to determine whether there was a correlative effect in either direction: measures of democratic tendency and democratic measures on Internet and cell phone use. (2)

While more research is called for at the end of their study, the authors make the following conclusions: while the political structure of power generally has not been transformed into a wave of democracy because of technology (in the narrow sense of Internet and cell phone diffusion as studied by the authors), there is some direction in the populist school of thought. Stodden and Meir find a statistically significant positive relationship between the rate of cell phone diffusion and the dependent variable of "Political Stability." (12) Though they find a significant negative relationship between cell phone diffusion and "Voice and Accountability," the authors posit that it may still be too early to expect an intimate relationship between global technology and a democratic deliberation in a public setting. (12) The diffusion of ICT access had no major influence on any of the three World Bank indicators. (12) The authors also note that cell phones had an earlier footprint than the Internet on a global scale, which may account for a difference in results in a future study. (12)

A predecessor to Stodden and Meir's study is "The Internet and democracy: Global catalyst or democratic dud?" (Best and Wade 2009) The authors study Internet usage from 1992 to 2002, and look at "…the relationship of a nation's gross domestic

product (GDP) per capita (purchasing power parity [PPP]) and adult literacy along with measures of the nation's level of civil liberties and political rights" (256) through an aggregate measurement of stages of democratization. Internet penetration is expressed by the number of users (per 1,000 people). (256) Six regions are used as independent variables: Africa, Asia, Eurasia, Middle East, Latin America, and Western Europe. (260) It was an early look at the Internet's impact on democracy, and the authors conclude that Internet penetration demonstrates more variation in levels of democratic development within a country than other variables such as literacy rates and geographic regions. Their contention is that the statistical triumph of the Internet is due to its role as a transmission belt for government transparency and non-governmental organization (NGO) effectiveness. The authors, however, do not claim that "…the Internet is a natural boon to democracy," (270) noting that, in their study, some geographic regions seem unaffected by amounts of Internet usage. A comprehensive theory was deemed impossible, therefore, given the variation in regions. Because their study incorporates six different regions, their statistical analysis concludes that the Internet has not made a significant impact in Western European nations. (269) This corresponds "…with Scheufele and Nisbet's (2002) finding that the Internet does not enhance democracy in America." (269)

Another study of democracy and ICT diffusion was offered by Philip N. Howard (Howard 2010) in looking at a diverse group of countries with Muslim communities. He suggests "A Technological Theory of Democracy" (183), one that connects the diffusion of technology with the "significant changes" (183) in the countries' systems of political communication. His approach is through the use of set theory that demonstrates "…the explicit connections between information technologies and democracy building in

countries with large Muslim communities." (184) Howard argues that while ICT diffusion can benefit both the autocratic regime and the democratic impulse, there is ample evidence to demonstrate a "close causal connection" between ICT proliferation and democratization. It is not an exclusive feature of democracy, but clearly a subset of the set of democracies. (197-198) The author's contribution to the literature is his insistence that while democratization can be helped by the Internet and social media, the results are varied across political systems and need to be recognized and acknowledged.

The issue of social media in stages of democratization cannot be addressed in isolation. In other words, one must also look at global trends to see if the environment is hospitable or harsh for social media in general. If Internet freedom is challenged globally, then it would seem that emerging democracies would have a harder time utilizing social media for democratic transition or consolidation. It is not just the challenge of social media in emerging democracies and in the consolidation of democracies, but the sustainability of democracies themselves.

An essay in *The Economist* argues that democracy is going through a hard time. It is one thing to kick out an autocrat, but difficult "…to create viable democratic regimes." (The Economist March 1, 2014) Look no further than the Egyptian experience. The essay posits that democracy, particularly liberal democracy or neoliberalism, has stalled in the 21st century, due to debt and dysfunction. "Democracy has always had its critics, but now old doubts are being treated with renewed respect as the weaknesses of democracy in its Western strongholds, and the fragility of its influence elsewhere, have become increasingly apparent." (1)

Why the stall? *The Economist* points to the financial crisis of 2007-08 and the rise of China, particularly that nation's demonstration that economic progress can be attained without liberal democracy. (2) According to the essay, there is hope for democracy, as long as that democracy is not illiberal, meaning that it takes more than a majority to make a democracy work. "The most successful new democracies have all worked in large part because they avoided the temptation of majoritarianism -- the notion that winning an election entitles the majority to do whatever it pleases." (4) India and Brazil are cited as examples of countries that have put limits on the power of the regime and expanded the rights of individuals. (4)

Another challenge for social media and democratization is the issue of government surveillance and censorship, not only by autocratic regimes, but democratic governments as well. An example, noted by Philip N. Howard, were U.S. trade restrictions on some types of digital content, which prevented the use "…of detailed maps by people in other countries." (Howard 2011, 174) The filtering service denied access to maps of a particular region by identifying the IP address of the computer. The author also notes the use of a "robot.txt" file during the George W. Bush presidency, used to restrict searches for approved documents, while the White House staff had no such restrictions. (174)

There is also the question of possible regulation of social media in a democratic state. Why the need for regulation? According to Jacob Rowbottom, "…the dominance of media elites will not become a thing of the past and even with the relatively low costs of distribution, a small number of speakers, often with substantial economic resources behind them, will consistently command a mass audience." (Rowbottom 2006, 501)

In addition to the continued domination of "old media" through websites and their star personalities, the gatekeeping role is maintained by search engines such as Google, which aggregates the information and prioritizes it in a way which may not reflect the public interest. (503). "A range of other private actors also impact on the opportunities for online expression, including software companies that produce user-friendly applications, ISPs and non-state regulators such as ICANN." (508) Another example: While NGOs have used social media to further democratic trends in a global context, there is the issue of transnational organizations, "the ruling class," (269) utilizing social media to counterbalance democratic activism. The case could be made, therefore, for regulation to ensure democratic access and as a counterweight to private control or domination of the Internet and other forms of social media. The broadcast model of regulation through the FCC might not be appropriate for social media, but a balanced approach to access and resistance to major economic domination of the Internet by private interests may bear further study.

Social media can also serve as a balance to media elites, democratic or otherwise. For example, Twitter and Facebook can serve as channels for instant corrections of a misstatement or error in fact by a traditional journalist. This ongoing process may further the ends of democratization. "In reporting on the Egyptian uprising, for example, various U.S. media outlets repeatedly credited Facebook, Twitter, WikiLeaks and even nonviolence strategist Gene Sharp for the revolution. Through social media, Egyptians challenged these reports, such as when Twitter users mocked 'The New York Times' with the hashtag #GeneSharpTaughtMe." (York 2011, 50) Ongoing corrections of fact are critical in a fast-moving protest, such as in Egypt; ongoing corrections in a

democratic environment are a healthy supplement to self-governing discourse. There are others, however, who think that social media has the opposite effect on democratic mores, becoming instead an instrument of silencing debate in the public sphere. According to a report published by the Pew Research Center, "It makes people less likely to voice opinions, particularly when they think their views differ from those of their friends…." (Miller 2014)

When one considers democratization from the perspective of modernization theory, authors such as Jan Teorell posit that modernization does not promote democratic transition per se, but rather inhibits the regression to autocracy. (Teorell 5) From his standpoint, modernization supports democracy retention, but is not leading the way to democracy creation or transition. He finds that media proliferation, not education or industrialization, prevents coup formation. (6) The effect of an increase in media "…on democratization increases with the level of democracy already achieved." (6) Economic conditions, in the short run, turn out to be counterintuitive, according to Teorell. "Economic upturns help sustain autocracies, whereas economic crises trigger transitions toward democracy." (6) Teorell's concept of media proliferation could easily incorporate the Internet and social media.

Because economic development can be part of the process of democratic transition and consolidation, a look at the dynamics of technological (including social media) adoption by various types of regimes may help us understand its impact and/or acceleration. The unsettled debate on the "Dictator's Dilemma" continues to serve as a brake on assumptions that social media is inimical to authoritarian regimes. While authoritarian regimes "…fear the political consequences of Internet expansion, they also

welcome its economic payoffs." (Corrales and Westhoff 2006, 911) From that strictly economic point of view, the authors note that variation in technology adoption is a factor in separating high-performing regions and countries from others. While it is clear that an economic powerhouse that adopts technology does not need to be democratic (China, for example), the potential for democratic transition and/or consolidation is more likely to follow economic development. (Przeworski and Limongi 1997, 176) The authoritarian regime, in some cases, creates a balancing act between controlling political use of the Internet and encouraging non-political use of the Internet; some citizens may be frustrated by political control, while other citizens value "…the non-political benefits that the Internet provides." (Corrales and Westhoff 930)

From a historic perspective, could one imagine the world of social media integrating in some way with democratic institutions? A glimpse of that vision came from Buckminster Fuller from a time before the Internet or social media. He saw democracy as having the potential to satisfy the needs of the individual through a democratic structure, but only if that structure were modernized so that it "…be mechanically implemented to give it a one-individual-to-another speed and spontaneity of reaction commensurate with the speed and scope of broadcast news now world-wide in seconds." (Fuller 1971, 9) He saw it as a form of "electrified voting," which would expand citizens' choices in the realm of legislation and administration. (Fuller 11) In essence, it becomes a form of teledemocracy. (Becker and Slaton 2000)

While it may be convenient to think of such concepts on a nation-state scale, social media as a contributor to democratic governance could apply to local governmental entities as well. Some cities could move beyond their official websites and form a

working laboratory for democratic governance. They could provide officials with instant feedback from both satisfied and unsatisfied constituents, not only through the municipalities' websites, but through popular social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter. Perceived misdeeds by local officials and politicians could be amplified throughout the community by postings and tweets (and reinforced by traditional media, i.e. television, radio and newspapers). Established democracies, such as the United States, are more likely to experiment with such forms of democratic practices through social media, on a state or local basis, which could be utilized by emerging democracies as they increase democratic consolidation. The Alaska Legislative Teleconference Network (LTN), for example, operating from 1978-82, created 14 centers throughout the state that were connected to the capitol through computers. Citizens were interacting with "state officials, legislators, and/or congressmen…." (Becker and Slaton 131) A videoconferencing capability was later added. Does this concept of interacting with officials and the next possible step, voting electronically in real time, seem farfetched? Thomas Jefferson thought so when he stated that, "A democracy [is] the only pure republic, but impracticable beyond the limits of a town." (Matsusaka 2005, 157) His conclusion was reached before the advent of the Internet. A further look at social media may additionally challenge the assumption of Mr. Jefferson.

Chapter 5

Social Media

As challenging as the definition of democracy can be, social media, because of its

relatively recent development, can be more easily categorized. While there are myriad

definitions of social media, it generally tends to be thought of in an informal

communicative context. This paper will incorporate the U.S. Federal Web Managers

Council's definition of social media "…as the various activities that integrate technology,

social interaction, and content creation." (Rishel 2011, 418) It is generally demarcated by

accessibility, affordability, portability, and reach. In that sense, social media could be

considered democratic itself, allowing individuals, with limited means or rights, an equal

access to connect and communicate with fellow citizens and governmental bodies, as

well as a larger global audience. While there are countermeasures of the state that can

partially or substantially thwart that accessibility, affordability, portability, and reach, the

mechanisms of social media allow for possible work arounds and other measures to allow

voices, images and messages to be sent and received.

Specific kinds of social media include Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Myspace,

Instagram, and Tumblr. Devices utilizing social media include computers, computer

tablets, and smart phones. All are reliant on the infrastructure or platform of the Internet.

The nature of social media, unlike traditional media, provides a one-to-many and

one-to-one method of communication, either in real time or in subsequent minutes or

hours. While other media provide avenues of expression, e.g. letters from readers to a

publication, callers to a talk show, or protesters speaking to a television reporter, all are

subject to editing. Social media, however, provides a continuous unedited feedback loop

of communication among many people on a global scale. Even a previously recorded

video uploaded on YouTube allows for instant posted comments.

There is a distinction between the software of social media websites and platforms

and the hardware of computers, cellular and smart phones, etc. A brief history may

clarify some of these concepts.

Though the posting of public messages on the Internet goes back to the creation of

Usenet in 1979, "social media" as a term began after the introduction of MySpace in

2003 and Facebook in 2004. The terms "Web 1.0" and "Web 2.0" refer to, respectively,

the content produced by individuals and content produced collaboratively. Web 2.0

features the tools to create content collaboratively, including: Adobe Flash for adding

animation, interactivity, and audio/video streams to web pages; RSS (Really Simple

Syndication) for publishing frequently updated content; and AJAX (Asynchronous Java

Script), which allows for updating web content without interfering with the display of the

whole page. (Kaplan and Haenlein 61) The complementary key to Web 2.0 is User

Generated Content (UGC), which relies on the "functionalities" mentioned above for

creation and distribution. Users of social media, to have any ongoing effect on

democratization in any stage and in any region, would necessarily need these tools of

Web 2.0.

While there have been demonstrations throughout history, and protests covered

by newspapers in the modern world, there has been no dominating technology to spread

the word across a region. (Rhue and Sundarajan 2012, 40) There have been forms of

media that could transmit word of events from one place to another, including the nearly

forgotten (but still active in the 21st century) shortwave radio. Generally, however, radio and shortwave radio were at the service of a controlling government or authority. The seminal birth of social media in an era of globalization and protest, as evidenced by the Green Movement in Iran and the Arab Spring, had an impact that other past media did not. Social media enabled protesters to communicate to the outside world through voices, images and messages and to organize and mobilize demonstrations. There were distinctions, based on local conditions, which affected the utilization and effectiveness of social media. There is a difference, however, between the ability to communicate and mobilize against an authoritarian regime and the subsequent declaration of victory for some form of nascent democracy. While the events in Iran and Egypt seem to have validated the Managers' Council's description of social media in the context of protest and mobilization, it does not necessarily apply to democratic consolidation and governance.

The following case selections will hopefully contribute to the understanding of social media. First, the recounting of events in Iran and Egypt and a review of the literature will provide a view of social media's influence in communication and mobilization. Then, an assessment of Nepal and South Africa will afford a view of social media's influence in democratic transition and consolidation.

Chapter 6

Case Selection: Iran

Iran offers some insight into the use of social media and the two-edge sword of communication/mobilization and surveillance/tracking.

Protests began in Iran following the election of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad on June 12, 2009. Seyyed Mir-Hossein Mousavi Khameneh, the reformist candidate and former Prime Minister of Iran (1981-1989), challenged the results and claimed victory. His supporters turned out in large numbers to challenge the "rigged" results of the election, which ensured another term of office for Ahmadinejad. As the protests and counter-protests escalated, social media technologies were employed. The "Twitter Revolution" was a simplified description of the process, however, since "…there were just over 19,000 Twitter users in Iran out of a total population of just under 80 million." (Christensen 2011, 238)

The Iranian demonstrations generated global attention most likely due to the strategic implications of a successful confrontation with a radical regime. It is a challenge for any political protest in a country that, despite some democratic trappings, is still considered a theocracy. The regime is relatively impervious to world opinion and can mount an aggressive counter attack against its own protesting citizens. Nonetheless, the importance of social media in this case is due to it being an example of contestation in a new arena. Politics, power relations, and rhetoric could conceivably be disputed in this space that some scholars posit as "The Agnostic Social Media…." (Rahimi 2011, 158) The irony is that while there is a popular notion of new media technologies as liberating

tools, (Diamond 2010, 70) the alternative view is, "What the new media technologies, in particular the Internet, have ultimately provided for the state are new operative spaces to strategically reconfigure societal relations and political activism in favor of maintaining status quo." (Rahimi 161)

What does this mean in a practical sense? The Iranian government has reacted to three phases of Internet development. From 1994 to 1998, the regime, ignorant of its disruptive potential, tolerated its rapid growth. In July 1998, the Internet was utilized by dissenters to publicize a student revolt and the regime began to restrict users' access by lowering connection speeds and filtering sites. In 2005, Ahmadinejad's administration began identifying and suppressing its opponents using intelligence agents and promoting its own ideology. (Golkar 2011, 59) When the Green Movement utilized social media to communicate to the international community and coordinate protests, the government employed a host of counter measures. The administration could track protesters' messaging, locate individuals through GPS tracking and arrest them. They could also slow down Internet speeds to make downloading of videos and pictures difficult. While the West provided assistance through the use of proxy servers and the United States requested Twitter postpone planned server maintenance so communications could continue, the Iranian government made effective use of opponents' social media to counter with its own disinformation. Some of the specific countermeasures included increased website blocking, website hacking and virus spreading, identifying users by their IP addresses, surveillance of Internet cafes for obtaining user information, and threatening email messages.

The confluence of social media prominence and state counter-measures, best reflected in the events of the Green Movement in Iran, has generated considerable debate about what worked and did not work during that volatile period. The popular notion of a "Twitter Revolution" is disputed in some of the literature. From the news media standpoint, for example, a study by Megan Knight of sources used by the press during the elections of June 2009 and the subsequent protests, demonstrated a reliance on traditional types, such as political statements and expert opinion. (Knight 2012, 61) This does not discount the communication streams of social media, but instead emphasizes the reliance of the professional press on traditional channels.

The professional media had its own challenges. Despite its lack of reliance on Twitter and other social media, it was subject to control and intimidation by Iranian authorities during the protests. According to Reporters Without Borders, "Journalists have suffered more than ever this year in Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's Iran. The president's disputed reelection plunged the country into a major crisis and fostered regime paranoia about journalists and bloggers." (Press Freedom Index 2009)

Another popular notion, disputed by some of the literature, is that the use of social media in Iran was dwarfed by the use of social media outside of the country, both by the diaspora and others. Kavanaugh notes that "…in the case of Iran during the June 2009 post-election demonstrations, there were fewer than 100 estimated Twitter users inside Iran. The bulk of the tweeting was being done by users outside Iran, often re-tweeting posts from users inside the country." (Kavanaugh 8)

A look at the three measurable indicators for Iran from 2003-2013 shows a continual increase in Internet users (per 100 people), fixed broadband Internet subscribers

(per 100 people), and mobile cellular subscriptions (per 100 people). Significantly, there

is major growth in fixed broadband Internet subscribers in the year following the 2009

protests, and in subsequent years. Either Iran is secure in expanding the Internet or secure

in using counter-measures to prevent communication among and mobilization from

dissidents. The fourth indicator, the Freedom House scores, representing levels of

freedom in a country, have not changed throughout this period for Iran. Iran has received

a six out of seven rating as "Not Free" (on a scale with one as the best and seven as the

worst). Given the increase represented by the data from the World Bank and the

continued intransigence of the Iranian regime, one can conclude that social media, while

possibly effective as a communication and mobilization tool, cannot be effective as a tool

in democratic transition.

Table 1. Iran Internet Users Per 100 People, 2003-2013

Year	Users
2003	6.93
2004	7.49
2005	8.10
2006	8.76
2007	9.47
2008	10.24
2009	11.07
2010	14.70
2011	21.00
2012	27.50
2013	31.40

Average:14.24; Standard deviation: 8.6; Increase: 353.1%
Source: World Bank

Table 2. Iran Fixed Broadband Internet Subscribers Per 100 People, 2003-2013

Year	Subscribers
2003	0.02
2004	No data
2005	No data
2006	0.14
2007	0.27
2008	0.41
2009	0.54
2010	1.29
2011	2.35
2012	4.02
2013	5.61

Average: 1.63; Standard deviation: 2.0; Increase: 27,950%

Source: World Bank

Table 3. Iran Mobile Cellular Subscriptions Per 100 People, 2003-2013

Year	Subscriptions
2003	5.33
2004	7.31
2005	12.13
2006	21.67
2007	41.45
2008	59.17
2009	71.46
2010	72.58
2011	74.30
2012	76.09
2013	84.24

Average: 47.79; Standard deviation 30.9; Increase: 1,480.5%

Source: World Bank

Table 4. Iran Freedom House Scores, 2004-2014

(On a scale with 1=best, 7=worst)

Year	Score	Designation
2004	6.0	Not Free
2005	6.0	Not Free
2006	6.0	Not Free
2007	6.0	Not Free
2008	6.0	Not Free
2009	6.0	Not Free
2010	6.0	Not Free
2011	6.0	Not Free
2012	6.0	Not Free
2013	6.0	Not Free
2014	6.0	Not Free

Note: The annual Freedom House reports depict data from the preceding year. As such, the 2004 entry contains information from January 1-December 31 of 2013.

Source: Freedom House

The Iranian example is one of push back against social media used for purposes of political communication and mobilization. It is a case of a regime that resists both internal and external pressure to modify its governmental and political structure and is a clear example of the two-edge sword of social media.

Chapter 7

Case Selection: Egypt

In Egypt, widespread protests began against President Hosni Mubarak's

government on January 25, 2011. Despite Mubarak's attempts to maintain control and

block social media (only partially successful), he was forced to resign later that year.

There is conflicting opinion about the impact of social media in the Egyptian protests as

well, brought to the forefront and highlighted by Mubarak's attempt to cut off the Internet

and digital tools. Some of the writings contend that there was no need for consideration

of the "Dictator's Dilemma" (which highlights the contradiction between a need for

control and a need for commerce), because the force behind Mubarak's resignation was

not necessarily social media, but the protesters' feet on the ground. "Within Egypt,

activists had been trying to ignite a revolution using blogs and Facebook for a decade,

with little sustained success. Many protesters in Egypt bristle at the suggestion that their

revolution was a 'Twitter revolution,' emphasizing instead their organization on the

ground and physical presence on the streets." (Aday et al. 6)

Zeynep Tufekcil and Christopher Wilson argue that social media had an impact

on the protests in Tahrir Square in a specific way. Based on a survey of participants in

Tahrir Square, they posit that Facebook particularly (and social media in general)

provided a basis for decision making in protest participation, logistics and chance of

success. (Tufekcil and Wilson 2012, 363) Geography of protests apparently played a part

in the application of social media. For example, Tahrir Square was the focal point of

protests against Mubarak. Some argue that since "ground zero" was known, there was not

as much need for social media to organize and mobilize protests. In other words, everybody knew where to go.

In the context of these two historic events, Iran with one outcome and Egypt with another (and still evolving), the conclusion that social media assisted in communications and mobilization in a significant way remains unsettled. Given the right set of circumstances, the sophistication of social media users, the lack of expertise for counter measures on the part of a particular government, and the susceptibility to international or regional pressure, social media (in the role of communications and mobilization) could play a part.

A look at the three measurable indicators for Egypt from 2003-2013 shows, despite a year of turmoil in 2011, there is a recurrent increase in Internet users (per 100 people), fixed broadband Internet subscribers (per 100 people), and a healthy increase in mobile cellular subscriptions (per 100 people) in the year 2012. The fourth indicator, the Freedom House scores, has not changed dramatically throughout this period for Egypt. It has improved marginally from 2003, when the country received a 6 out of 7 rating (on a scale with one as the best and seven as the worst). From 2003 forward, Egypt received a 5.5 rating, with the exception of 2013 when President Morsi was still in power. That year, the country received a "Partly Free" designation of 5.0. The increased penetration of social media, which helped in the initial phases of communication and mobilization, and may have had an impact on democratic transition in 2012, cannot be ruled out for a future role in Egypt. The decision to remove President Morsi from office, though he was democratically elected, was broadly supported for Egypt. While not an electoral decision, it did represent the will of the people.

Table 5. Egypt Internet Users Per 100 People, 2003-2013

(Per 100 people)

Year	Users
2003	4.03
2004	11.92
2005	12.75
2006	13.66
2007	16.03
2008	18.01
2009	25.69
2010	31.42
2011	39.83
2012	44.00
2013	49.56

Average: 24.26; Standard deviation: 15.0; Increase: 1,129.8%

Source: World Bank

Table 6. Egypt Fixed Broadband Internet Subscribers Per 100 People, 2003-2013

Year	Subscribers
2003	0.07
2004	0.11
2005	0.19
2006	0.35
2007	0.64
2008	1.01
2009	1.36
2010	1.85
2011	2.32
2012	2.83
2013	3.25

Average: 1.27; Standard deviation: 1.1; Increase: 4,542.9%

Source: World Bank

Table 7. Egypt Mobile Cellular Subscriptions Per 100 People, 2003-2013

Year	Subscriptions
2003	8.34
2004	10.82
2005	18.98
2006	24.66
2007	40.54
2008	54.69
2009	72.09
2010	90.50
2011	105.07
2012	119.91
2013	121.50

Average: 60.65; Standard deviation 43.5; Increase: 1,356.8%
Source: World Bank

Table 8. Egypt Freedom House Scores, 2004-2014
(On a scale with 1=best, 7=worst)

Year	Score	Designation
2004	6.0	Not Free
2005	5.5	Not Free
2006	5.5	Not Free
2007	5.5	Not Free
2008	5.5	Not Free
2009	5.5	Not Free
2010	5.5	Not Free
2011	5.5	Not Free
2012	5.5	Not Free
2013	5.0	Partly Free
2014	5.5	Not Free

Note: The annual Freedom House reports depict data from the preceding year. As such, the 2004 entry contains information from January 1-December 31 of 2013.
Source: Freedom House

The Egyptian example is a case of the ousting of a leader while the state remained unchanged. Subsequent events demonstrated that electoral democracy was initiated, but the popularly elected president was removed by the military with the backing of the majority of the population. Social media seems to have played a part in the communication and mobilization phase of the protests, but did not prevent a slide back to authoritarianism.

Chapter 8

Case Selection: Nepal

Nepal, officially the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal, is one country where both democratic transition and social media are contemporary dynamics. Though we cannot necessarily extrapolate the experiences of democratic transition and social media penetration in Nepal and apply it globally, a look at this country in the 21st century can provide some insight into the interaction of these two forces. While Nepal is a small country, it was included as a case selection for its modern experience as an emerging democracy, its challenging societal makeup, and its nascent Internet structure and social media applications. Nepal also has a third reality, the literacy rate, which can affect the production and consumption of social media. There is a distinction, however, between the written screen (texts, for example) and audio and video, which can effectively be utilized by those who cannot read or write.

Since the 1950s, the Nepal political structure has been transformed from a hereditary monarchy to a constitutional monarchy, to absolute power by the king, to a federal democratic republic. It was a rocky transition to democracy. In 1951, the Nepali monarch established a cabinet system of government. In 1990, a multiparty democracy within the framework of a constitutional monarchy was created, but six years later, an insurgency led by Maoists broke out. During the 10-year civil war, the king assumed absolute power (2002) dissolving the cabinet and parliament. In late 2006 a peace accord was reached and an interim constitution was announced.

After national elections in April 2008, the Constituent Assembly (CA) declared

Nepal a federal democratic republic and abolished the monarchy. It elected the country's

first president in July. Between 2008 and 2011 there were four different coalition

governments, led twice by the United Communist Party of Nepal-Maoist, and twice by

the Communist Party of Nepal-United Marxist-Leninist (UML). The Supreme Court set

the drafting of a constitution by May 2012, but the Assembly was unsuccessful in doing

so, and was dissolved by then Prime Minister Baburam Bhattarai. The major political

parties agreed to create an interim government in March 2013, headed by then Chief

Justice Khil Raj Regmi, with a mandate to hold elections for a new Constituent

Assembly. Elections were held in November 2013, resulting in a coalition government

formed in February 2014. (World Factbook, CIA)

While Nepal has a democratic structure that is relatively new and social media

penetration that is relatively low, the country can provide an opportunity to look at the

growth of social media while its democracy consolidates. There are challenges to this

nation-state, including hosting "…125 ethnic and caste and 123 linguistic groups where

Nepali serves as a lingua franca." (Dahal 2014) Dahal is optimistic, though, concluding in

his essay on social media that, "The informational revolution has unleashed the aspiration

of participatory democracy and development in Nepal that stresses on citizens

participation in public life, improved governance steering, coordination and collective

action in the delivery of public goods and services, civic renewal and citizenship

building, judicious role of non-state actors and justice-promoting development

measures." (Dahal 2014)

Contrast Dahal's perspective with a paper presented by Lal Babu Yadav at Telegraph Weekly/FES (Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung) national level media seminar on December 20, 2001. Yadav notes that, "Knowledge about the right to information is not context free. In Nepal where public literacy is just about 40 percent and functional literacy is about its half, one can easily guess how many people know about their fundamental rights and duties." He also addresses the uneven distribution of "instruments of media," bemoaning the lack of access by people living in remote areas. Lack of access, according to Yadav, means less participation in policy and decision making affairs. The uneven distribution of income and pervasive poverty prevents parts of the population from consideration of such issues as "globalization" and the "information highway." Mundane matters, such as education, healthcare and irrigation come first. (Yadav 3)

In 2012, Ujjwal Acharya argued, in a policy discussion paper on behalf of the Alliance for Social Dialogue, for the creation of a policy for online media. While narrowing the paper to a discussion of media and excluding citizen use, Acharya posited that "…the state should play a role of facilitator for the growth of the Internet-based media, which contains within itself the power to bring positive changes in our society." (Acharya 4) While access to the Internet and devices that connect to the Internet are important topics, Acharya's paper focused on content and the media that generates that content. The author noted the possible negative uses of the Internet, citing the London riot, violence in Assam, and "…campaigns to misinform the public about an incident in Malaysia. Despite government's denial of deaths of any Nepalis in the airplane crash in Malaysia, some deliberately used photos of other conflict zones around the world to claim they were images of Nepalis who died in Malaysia." (4)

As mentioned in an earlier chapter, attempts to shut off the Internet by Egyptian authorities were mostly ineffective during the Arab Spring and led to commercial disruption. A similar case occurred in Nepal in 2005. A "natural experiment" that demonstrated the effects of a shutdown occurred on February 1, 2005. The Kingdom of Nepal shut off telecommunications, both internally and externally, because of a threat from what it called Maoist insurgents. (Ang et al. 548) It had limited success, due to the parallel communications system of the rebels.

Nepal's unique geography must also be considered. Not all of the country is easily accessible for phone service, especially in the mountains in this landlocked country. (552) "…many parts of Nepal are accessible only on foot. Sometimes, it can take three to four days for a villager to reach the nearest bus stop. Telecommunication links are therefore all the more valuable, especially as a substitution for transportation where possible." (553) The government strategy at the time was not necessarily to shut down all phone service (although that was the practical effect), but to halt anonymous pre-paid users, since captured insurgents were found with prepaid phones in their possession. Once the service was restored, all users had to register (including the prepaid users). (553) Later reports indicated that the insurgents had their own network and that the government was using the shutdown to keep political parties from organizing in urban areas. The initial shut down was effective, but past the point of two weeks, citizens were increasingly perturbed. Business was disrupted and the social network of individuals was disturbed. What were the implications for democracy? "The managing director of Nepal Telecommunications said the shutdown in phone service was ironic. He said that it was thought that telecommunications created the movement for democracy in 1990 as it

helped to disseminate information fast." The shutdown was 'self-defeating,' leading to a crisis that made the king's security worse. (560)

The transition to democracy for Nepal began on May 28, 2008, when the newly elected assembly demonstrated that the country would become a secular and inclusive democratic republic. As Nepal transitioned into democracy, young adults utilized Facebook and other social media to pressure political parties to draw up a constitution. After a civil war and the abolition of the monarchy, a new constitution was supposed to be drafted by May 2010. The delay in drafting set off the campaign, "Nepal Unites," which mobilized young protesters for four consecutive Saturdays using social media sites. Internet penetration in Nepal at the time (2011) was 625,000 users and a penetration rate of 2.2%. (Internetworldstats.com) "In less than a month, thousands of young professionals, activists and students have joined the campaign to press lawmakers to complete the transition to democracy. For most of them, this is the first time they have turned out to take part in such protests -- whether on the streets or on the net. Their message to lawmakers was simple: "No work, no pay." ("Nepal's Youth Turn to Social Media.")

The use of social media by candidates during the Constituent Assembly (CA) election was highlighted in 2013. According to a report by "My Republica," candidates capitalized on the social media platforms instead of customary flyers and posters. "The candidates, especially of the major political parties, including the UCPN (Maoist), Nepali Congress, the CPN-UML, have not only asked for votes via Facebook but also used it as a platform to explain to voters why they should win the election and their party's policies and programs." The parties also established official Facebook pages and websites. ("Poll

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candidates using social media to reach out to voters") Internet penetration in Nepal in 2012 was 2,690,162 users and a penetration rate of 9.0 %. (InternetWorld Stats.com) The Nepal Telecommunications Authority (NTA) data penetration rate reached 26.93% by mid-August in 2013, prior to the vote count. (NTA) This year, 2014, increased social media usage was experienced after the vote count of the second Constituent Assembly election in September. "'Online social media is instant and carries informative value,' said Binod Bhattarai, a media expert talking about the Twitter and election updates. He added that this was probably the first time Nepalis have used the social and online media in such a way and that it has also indicated that traditional media like TV stations and newspapers need to reinvent themselves." ("Nepalis flood social media with poll result updates") That statement could parallel a contemporary discussion in established democracies with technological sophistication. The information revolution in Nepal media is acknowledged as crucial to democratic consolidation. One example comes from the People's Review Weekly: "The informational revolution has unleashed the aspiration of participatory democracy and development in Nepal that stresses on citizens participation in public life, improved governance steering, coordination and collective action in the delivery of public goods and services, civic renewal and citizenship building, judicious role of non-state actors and justice-promoting development measures." (Dahal 2014)

There is another view of the utilization of social media in Nepal, distinct from concepts of democracy vs. control. A report by The Himalayan News Service in 2011 noted the increase in mobile Internet and cable and wireless modem/fibre-optic connections, but laments the lack of economic utilization: "…data revealed that the users

are not utilizing Internet for productive works, experts said. Penetration has been increasing but the trend cannot fundamentally promote national economy, director at the Nepal Telecommunications Authority Ananda Raj Khanal said." ("NTA, Net Users on Mobile Increase") Khanal concludes that the increase in social networking sites, blogs and entertainment sites diverted focus from the importance of commerce. In other words, the 2011 increase in the penetration rate of social media did not contribute to the national economy.

The future of democratic consolidation in Nepal clearly rests with the young, and despite the pessimistic economic evaluation of Khanal, young people could utilize social media for political awareness and communication. "But if the social media fuelled (sic) youth activism is any indication, it will play a major role in creating political awareness among the youths putting them in the frontlines of positive change in their society." (My Republica 2011)

In 2014, the United States announced grant assistance - through U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) -- of $402 million to Nepal. ("US Announces $402 Millon for Strengthening Democracy in Nepal") The U.S. indicated that it would be used to strengthen Nepal's democratic institutions. Nowhere in the announcement, ironically, was there a line item contribution for social media development.

If social media is increasingly utilized for political discourse and awareness, and is combined with economic development (and grant assistance), there is a future for democratic consolidation. But from the view of Khanal and others and, from the perspective of modernization theory, Internet penetration rates alone do not guarantee economic progress, which is essential to preventing a slide back to non-democratic rule.

A look at the three measurable indicators for Nepal from 2003-2013 shows a dramatic increase in Internet users (per 100 people) from 2009 to 2010, fixed broadband Internet subscribers (per 100 people) from 2011 to 2012, and mobile cellular subscriptions (per 100 people) from 2006 onward. The fourth indicator, the Freedom House scores, representing levels of freedom in a country, are in the middle range for Nepal, averaging 4.0-4.5, "Partly Free," with the exception of 2006, where the country was rated at "Not Free" at 5.5. Given the general increase in users, subscribers and subscriptions and Freedom House scores, there is no obvious correlation between social media usage and democratic consolidation.

Table 9. Nepal Internet Users Per 100 People, 2003-2013

Year	Users
2003	0.32
2004	0.44
2005	0.82
2006	1.14
2007	1.41
2008	1.73
2009	1.97
2010	7.93
2011	9.00
2012	11.14
2013	13.30

Average: 4.47; Standard deviation: 4.9; Increase: 4,056.3%
Source: World Bank

Table 10. Nepal Fixed Broadband Internet Subscribers, Per 100 People, 2003-2013

Year	Subscribers
2003	0.00
2004	0.00
2005	0.00
2006	0.00
2007	0.04
2008	0.04
2009	0.05
2010	0.21
2011	0.34
2012	0.62
2013	0.75

Average: 0.19; Standard deviation: 0.3; Increase 1,775%
Source: World Bank

Table 11. Nepal Mobile Cellular Subscriptions Per 100 People, 2003-2013

Year	Subscriptions
2003	0.33
2004	0.46
2005	0.89
2006	4.51
2007	12.59
2008	16.00
2009	21.08
2010	34.25
2011	49.17
2012	60.45
2013	71.46

Average: 24.65; Standard deviation: 25.6; Increase: 21,554.5%
Source: World Bank

Table 12. Nepal Freedom House Scores, 2004-2013
(On a scale with 1=best, 7=worst)

Year	Score	Designation
2004	4.5	Partly Free
2005	5.0	Partly Free
2006	5.5	Not Free
2007	4.5	Partly Free
2008	4.5	Partly Free
2009	4.0	Partly Free
2010	4.0	Partly Free
2011	4.0	Partly Free
2012	4.0	Partly Free
2013	4.0	Partly Free
2014	4.0	Partly Free

Note: The annual Freedom House reports depict data from the preceding year. As such, the 2004 entry contains information from January 1-December 31 of 2013.
Source: Freedom House

While there is seemingly no correlation between social media and democratic consolidation in Nepal at this time, the increases in penetration over the years may result in increased political participation, particularly by the young. Increased political activity could enhance consolidation in the future.

Chapter 9

Case Selection: South Africa

The Republic of South Africa, a regional power on the continent, faces the

challenges of both a colonial and apartheid past as it deals with its democratic present.

Though South Africa is a single nation, its racial, economic and political currents make it

a diverse state where local traditions and customs play a part in daily life. (Ross 2008)

Great Britain, which gained formal possession of the Cape Colony in 1814,

combined its Cape and Natal colonies with the Boer republics in 1910 to create the Union

of South Africa. South Africa's National Party (NP), after gaining power in 1948, devised

the apartheid system that separated the country's population into racial groups. The

country gained independence and became a republic in 1961, subsequently withdrawing

from the British Commonwealth because of disapproval of its racial policies.

(CultureGrams - ProQuest 2014)

The African National Congress (ANC), which was first organized in 1912, led the

opposition to apartheid, but was banned in 1960 for its activities and communist views.

Nelson Mandela, along with other ANC leaders, was jailed. International sanctions

followed. Frederik Willem (F. W.) de Klerk, elected president in 1989, began to reform

the country's political system. He released Mandela and legalized the ANC.

Subsequently, the party suspended it armed resistance. (CultureGrams - ProQuest 2014)

The first multi-racial and multi-party elections in 1994 brought an end to

apartheid and resulted in majority rule under an ANC-led government. Mandela was

elected president in 1996, and a new constitution that guaranteed equal rights was ratified. (CultureGrams - ProQuest 2014)

The growth of social media in South Africa began in 1990 when the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) issued the .za domain to South Africa, allowing the development of Internet access via computer. "The country's social media then experienced an even bigger growth spurt by the Internet developing at such an astonishingly high pace." (van Eeden, Taljaard and Borchardt 2013)

While a survey of Lexis Nexus indicates that most articles on social media in South Africa focused on economic aspects, not political use, there is evidence of social media utilization during the recent electoral campaigns. (Tracey 2013) The utilization of social media in democratization goes further than its application in elections. In a subset of social media penetration, a report of women's adaptation and political use in a democratic context was analyzed in a journal article by Desiree Lewis, Tigist Shewarega Hussen and Monique van Vuuren. (Feminist Africa 2013) "South Africans marginalized on the basis of age as well as gender have used new media platforms to carve out spaces of freedom and moments of independent communication. These spaces and moments rarely provide direct political commentary or resistance; Rather, they offer cognitive spaces in which certain youth, and young women in particular, articulate their consciousness of their social, cultural and political world." (48) Even as the authors note consciousness over participation, the carved out spaces allow for communication, which can lead to "consciousness raising," and ultimately stimulate political action. The challenge, however, for women and young people, is the culture the authors attribute to South Africa, where the young are expected to defer to the old. President Jacob Zuma, in

responding to dissent by former ANC Youth League President Julius Malema and his supporters, conveyed the established notion that "…clearly implies that South African politics, similar to the politics of other postcolonial states in Africa, is the domain of the veterans, the 'old,' those who fought for liberation and ensured that a younger generation has freedom." (48)

The impact of social media in South Africa demonstrates a change and challenge to that cultural mindset. The advantage of that change and challenge is that it occurs in an emerging democracy, not an authoritarian regime. Instead, it is a challenge to a paternalizing mentality. A key element of the rise of social media, from a female perspective, is imagery. Lewis, et. al note the importance of images in today's technological world, both as a subtext of South African feminism, but also an indicator of a broader political context. "The resonance of images combining very little text are a reminder of the importance of the communicative value of fragments of information in the digitised age. It is possible to see the effects of these as discouraging reflection, promoting information that is quickly digested and forgotten. But the animated responses to many of the short digital activist messages on Facebook pages such as Actifem is evidence of their impact -- in politicising groups and encouraging further reflection." (60)

Despite acknowledged inequality by scholars, journalists and others, including the ways that social media are accessed (prepaid vs. subscription, smart phone vs. basic mobile phones, 3G network vs. slow EDGE and GPRS connections), and exploitatively priced mobile network tariffs, there is still the reality of social media as intermediary in the quest for democratic consolidation. In light of that inequality, social media is used in democratic discourse. "In South Africa, political parties have now adopted Facebook

across the board, and it is also used for everyday political expression and participation by many individuals and civic organizations." (Walton and Leukes 154) The authors posit that, for purposes of their article "… it is sufficient to draw the inference that mobile applications played a particularly important role in broadening access to public discourse via Facebook…." (160)

It is important to note again that simply having access to Facebook or other social media does not guarantee consumption of messages. Mxit, a ground-breaking application that helped speed the adoption of the mobile Internet, provided mobile instant messaging and chat platforms without hyptertextual link-sharing. That limits access to the larger democratic conversation, (153) because there is no measurement of page popularity, no trending topics as in Twitter, no indexing by major search engines such as Google. There is change in the air, however. "Our case study of mobile political discourse in 2012 shows Mxit shifting towards an increasing openness…." (160) That openness would allow more technical applications that would, in turn, encourage more content and more distribution. From a democratic perspective, that would be a positive change.

Ironically, as younger people in South Africa take to mobile social media and challenge the culture and politics within a democratic framework, Facebook usage has declined in the nation. According to Pretoria News (April 8, 2013), "Statistics from social media monitoring company SocialBakers show 967, 220 fewer South Africans logged on to the social network in the last six months (October 2012-March 2013)." While the largest age group of South African Facebook users were 18-to-24-year-olds (1,679,620 users), divided evenly between males and females, the fastest growing age group among Facebook users in South Africa were over-60s. Given the deference in the culture to the

older generation, this could be interpreted as an interest in the over 60 years of age demographic in utilizing social media as citizens for political discourse and activity. It could also be a disinterest by the younger generation once an interest was shown by the older generation.

Political parties in South Africa have also recognized the impact of social media and have incorporated them into campaigns. An article in the January 25, 2014 issue of *The Star*, written by Craig Dodds, addresses the key role social media would play in the May 7, 2014 elections. The African National Congress (ANC), late to the social media party, launched a new app on Mxit. "Arthur Goldstuck, managing director of technology market research firm World Wide Worx, said Mxit was one of the few tools available to the ANC to fend off the EFF's (Economic Freedom Fighters) efforts to woo young voters with its social media-smart campaign and militant image." (Dodds) Significantly, Goldstruck says the impact of social media will be even greater in 2019 because of the pervasiveness of Internet and social media access. Dodds also quotes Wadim Schreiner, former chief executive officer of Media Tenor, on the effectiveness of social media influence in urban areas, such as Gauteng. "'With such a high density of people and such a high uptake of social media, and the level of conversation going on in Gauteng on social media, there is a high likelihood that social media could be the decisive factor in one or two percentage points, which might just be the one or two percentage points that shift the elections towards one side or the other….'" (Dodds)

Personalization becomes a factor in South African political parties' use of social media. "…while ANC president Jacob Zuma has a Twitter account and an impressive 309,000 followers, 'everybody' knew he did not personally tweet," according to

Goldstruck. (Dodds) Dodds notes that, "DA (Democratic Alliance) leader Helen Zille, on the other hand, has tweeted about everything from vicious rodent attacks in her driveway to reports of leadership battles in the party." (Dodds) As social media increases in awareness, pervasiveness and sophistication, its integration into the body politic appears likely, with democratic consolidation likely to follow.

The democratic utilization of social media in South Africa is not limited to established political parties. Mamphela Ramphele, a former activist against apartheid who became a medical doctor, an academic and a businesswoman, formed a new political party, Agang South Africa. She views social media as an important tool, telling reporters at a news conference, "You can multiply your troops very quickly on social media…Thank God for information technology." (Quintal and Areff 2013) While she later withdrew from the party after a controversial decision to renege on a promise to merge Agang South Africa with the Democratic Alliance and run as its presidential candidate, the use of social media was recognized as essential for a nascent party.

South Africa, despite its apartheid past and current challenges of inequality stemming from that history, is beginning to utilize social media for democratic consolidation. It is a learning curve for this emerging democracy, but if economic development and social media development are not disrupted, then South Africans can have a reason to be optimistic. While developed countries, both democratic and autocratic, utilize social media both economically, recreationally and politically, it appears that new democracies such as South Africa are on a learning curve for development and application.

A look at the three measurable indicators for South Africa from 2003-2013 shows

an increase in Internet users (per 100 people) from 2009-2013, fixed broadband Internet

subscribers (per 100 people) from 2009-2013, and increasing mobile cellular

subscriptions (per 100 people) with major growth in 2004-2005 and 2010-2013. The

fourth indicator, the Freedom House scores, representing levels of freedom in a country,

changed from a high of 1.5 in the years 2003-2005 to 2.0 2006-2013, but despite the

change in rating, South Africa has been designated as a "Free" country. The increase in

Internet users, fixed broadband Internet subscribers, and mobile cellular subscriptions

coincides with the increased political use of social media, increased usage by political

parties and the development of more sophisticated social media applications. Given these

figures, and its status as a "Free" country, there is the potential for an effect on

democratic consolidation in the future.

Table 13. South Africa Internet Users Per 100 People, 2003-2013

Year	Users
2003	7.00
2004	8.42
2005	7.48
2006	7.60
2007	8.06
2008	8.43
2009	10.00
2010	24.00
2011	33.97
2012	41.00
2013	48.90

Average: 18.62; Standard deviation: 15.7; Increase: 598.6%
Source: World Bank

Table 14. South Africa Fixed Broadband Internet Subscribers Per 100 People, 2003-2013

Year	Subscribers
2003	0.04
2004	0.12
2005	0.34
2006	0.68
2007	0.76
2008	0.87
2009	0.94
2010	1.44
2011	1.74
2012	2.11
2013	3.06

Average: 1.10; Standard deviation 0.9; Increase 7,550%

Source: World Bank

Table 15. South Africa Mobile Cellular Subscriptions Per 100 People, 2003-2013

Year	Subscriptions
2003	35.97
2004	43.82
2005	70.40
2006	81.07
2007	85.27
2008	89.52
2009	91.24
2010	97.90
2011	123.19
2012	130.55
2013	147.46

Average: 90.58; Standard deviation: 34.1; Increase 310%

Source: World Bank

Table 16. South Africa Freedom House Scores
(On a scale with 1=best, 7=worst)

Year	Score	Designation
2004	1.5	Free
2005	1.5	Free
2006	1.5	Free
2007	2.0	Free
2008	2.0	Free
2009	2.0	Free
2010	2.0	Free
2011	2.0	Free
2012	2.0	Free
2013	2.0	Free
2014	2.0	Free

Note: The annual Freedom House reports depict data from the preceding year. As such, the 2004 entry contains information from January 1-December 31 of 2013.
Source: Freedom House

South Africa's history and unique place on the continent provides a view of a democracy that, despite challenges, has the resources to develop both its social media and democratic spaces.

Chapter 10

Conclusion

While the Internet had its origins in the 20th century, social media developed in the 21st century with the introduction of MySpace and Facebook. Despite it being a relatively new phenomenon, social media has demonstrated a pervasive effect on the way we think, interact, and do business. This paper reviewed the literature on the Green Movement and The Arab Spring, examined two emerging democracies, and outlined the social media tools available to people and to the state. Because of social media's exponential growth, its evolutionary and/or revolutionary nature makes it challenging to keep abreast of ramifications and to predict its future in all areas of life. Even this paper is a snapshot in time and place, and a narrow focus on selected emerging democracies. There are clearly limitations in my approach to the subject and a challenge to explain the ephemeral aspects of social media and democratization.

Despite this constricted view, there are several observations that can be expanded upon by others interested in the ongoing development and accessibility of social media in the political world. Over time, more data will become available and more perspectives will be shared on the influence, impact and nature of social media.

For a current perspective (Washington Post 2014), the protests in Ferguson, Missouri surrounding the death of Michael Brown, demonstrate an example of social media's impact on communication and mobilization. The "contagion effect" was evident in the buildup to the Grand Jury announcement through Twitter. Information about who was participating in the protests, location of the protests, and designated safe areas were

some of the components of the process. Group identity was another consideration, shaped by the number and tone of the tweets. (Tucker 2014). Additional factors for the pervasiveness of social media in this case were speed, comprehensive coverage through multiple users, the ability to search for key information and to provide news not covered by the traditional media. Social media, as mentioned earlier, can be a double-edge sword. In this case, there was no interference by the state, but people may choose not to participate in protests because information may indicate that the protests could turn violent. In the example of Ferguson, however, there is not enough data to suggest such causality.

The infrastructure and utilization of social media in emerging democracies may not be as sophisticated as those in developed democracies or autocracies. However, globally, the marked increase in Internet penetration and social media websites (and their applications) year to year should lead to a developing refinement.

The experiences of protesters in Iran and Egypt demonstrated that even with low levels of penetration, the perceived effectiveness of social media in mobilizing and communicating with large groups of people can be influential, both domestically and internationally. Does this indicate instant regime change and transition to democracy? Given the power of the state to effectively or partially block and censor social media, the changes in regime or regime composition remain, from a democratic perspective, frustratingly slow. It seems to be a case of hurry up (social media) and wait (democratic transition and consolidation). Patience, however, may have its virtue in that globalization and the "flat world" concept articulated by Thomas Friedman may provide the lubrication for the engine of social media.

If the medium is the message, perhaps Aldous Huxley's brave new world will not be a nightmare of politics and technology, but rather a democratic "flat world" of interconnectedness and democratic values. The composition of political leadership and organization on the streets may have more of an impact on democratization than social media, and a leader or leadership structure is important for any political organization, mobilization and, eventually, governance. The culture of a nation is essential to consider as well, as noted in the attitudes of South African leaders who believe the older generation knows better than the young generation on running a country. Since there are many definitions of democracy, democratic values may have to be decided by each nation and its people, taking into consideration cultural differences and stages of development.

The future of democracy, in any form, may not be exclusively dependent on social media, but as technology broadens and becomes more portable than ever, it is possible to foresee a future where access to voting, expressing one's opinion, or mobilizing supporters is accessible via hardware on every individual's wrist (e.g. Apple Watch) or head (e.g. Google Glass). That access would not be limited to high-income individuals, but rather would become a given for all global citizens, similar to the extensive penetration of the Internet and pervasive cell phone usage that we know today. The once constricting digital divide could be a thing of the past.

The connecting bonds formed by social media between human beings, nation-states, regions of the world and transnational organizations may erase the concept of exogenous and endogenous influences and provide a new way of communicating and governing. In that possible future, with equal access to political power, there may be a need for added definitions of democracy.

One cannot minimize, however, the state's use of the Internet and social media for surveillance and monitoring. While autocracies such as China can certainly prosper with the Internet and other forms of social media, technology cannot be completely controlled by the state. The fourth wave of democracy may be slow in coming, but given the inventiveness of digital entrepreneurs, the tools of liberation can be enhanced and the possibility of loosening the reins of autocracy and transition to democracy must be considered. From the perspective of emerging democracies, the utilization of social media by citizens to communicate and mobilize, and the adoption of social media by political parties, demonstrates that such countries could be on the road to democratic consolidation. One of the ways of keeping democracies intact, from the perspective of modernization theory, is to marry economic development to social media. Paradoxically, as noted earlier, social media can also be utilized for economic development. The relationship is both symbiotic and sequential. One can precede the other, or both can develop simultaneously. In either case, the future of democracy and social media will hopefully be a brave new world of hope.

While this paper cannot say definitively that social media has had a major influence on democratic transition and democratic consolidation in the four case selections, the infrastructure is continuing to expand to enable social media to play an ever increasing role in the future. My view is that the transforming nature of social media, despite the double-edge sword of state reaction and its resources to curtail, control and block, will play a future defining role in democratic transition and consolidation.

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Education

University of Nevada, Las Vegas
M.A., Political Science, Anticipated December 2014

University of California, Los Angeles
B.A., Political Science, May 1971

Professional Experience

IDS Creative Communications
President   1997-present
Public relations consulting specializing in gaming and entertainment

Las Vegas Hilton
Vice President, Communications and Community Relations   2004-09
Directed all media communications, represented property in government, community and
political relations, and acted as spokesperson

Office of Nevada Lt. Governor Lorraine T. Hunt
Deputy Chief of Staff, Director of Communications   2003-04
Directed all media communications on local, regional, national and international levels, acted as
spokesperson, advised on policy issues and interacted with governmental, nonprofit, and
community organizations

Tropicana Resort and Casino
Director of Public Relations   1986-97
Directed public relations activities on a national, regional, and local level, served as spokesperson

Downtown Progress Association
Director of Marketing   1984-86
Promoted Downtown Las Vegas on a national level, advised Downtown properties on marketing,
public relations, and media, served as spokesperson

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Community Activities, Awards and Recognition

Commissioner, Nevada Access to Justice Commission (2012-present)
"Talk About Las Vegas With Ira" weekly KUNV Radio-Internet show host (2012-present)
Civilian Military Council, Nellis Air Force Base (2004-present)
"Las Vegas Notebook" weekly newsletter author and publisher (1997-present)
Three Square Food Bank Development Committee (2007-13)
"Lunchtime/Nighttime With Ira" weekly TV-Radio-Internet show host (2005-2011)
President's Club and Board of Advisors, Las Vegas Chamber of Commerce (2005-2009)
Las Vegas Chamber of Commerce Business Council (2004)
Las Vegas Chamber of Commerce Board of Trustees (2004)
"Las Vegas Notebook" weekly radio show host (1998-2004)
UNLV Continuing Education Comedy Writing class instructor (1977-2003)
InBusiness Las Vegas "Power Couple" recipient with wife, Gina (2003)
United States Air Force Civic Leader Tour participant (2003)
National Security Forum participant, Maxwell Air Force Base (2002)
InBusiness Las Vegas "Most Influential Men in Southern Nevada" award (2001)
Las Vegas Chamber of Commerce National Tourism Week chairman (1998-2001)
Leadership Las Vegas graduate (2000)
UNLV-PRSA Casino Public Relations accreditation course instructor (2000)
Nevada Broadcasters Hall of Fame inductee (1998)