



Repression without Borders: The Long Arm of Authoritarian Regimes

HOUSTON, TEXAS, UNITED STATES, November 6, 2016 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Immigrant groups remain subject to authoritarian regime's repressive effects even after they leave their homelands, according to new research by Dr. Dana Moss, a sociologist at the University of Pittsburgh in the academic journal [Social Problems](#). However, these repressive effects may be overcome if a large-scale activist event in the homeland takes place, like the 2011 Arab Spring (in which there were demonstrations, uprisings, and protests across the Arab world).

Using data from interviews with Libyan and Syrian activists in the United States and Great Britain before and during the Arab Spring. Moss found that "these populations cannot fully 'exit' from authoritarianism, and that those with domestic opportunities for protest remained constrained."

Before the Arab Spring, Libyan and Syrian individuals living in the West experienced heavy sanctions from their former regimes if they engaged in activism against those in power in their home-countries, such as threats, surveillance, and acts of violence, even within their new countries in the West. They faced issues with their home countries as well, including problems traveling back home to visit or threats or acts of harm towards relatives at home. These sanctions instilled fear in many potential activists and effectively deterred public anti-regime mobilization before the Arab Spring, even in new country environments that promoted freedom and civil liberties.

However, during the Arab Spring, many of the barriers to transnational activism fell. For example, regimes were now perceived as incapable of making good on the traditional threats that they had relied on and the risks and sacrifices of activism now seemed to be worth it, which allowed activists of authoritarian regimes to mobilize publically during the Arab Spring to an unprecedented degree.

For further information, please contact Devon R. Goss (devon.goss@uconn.edu) or the author Dana Moss (dmm209@pitt.edu). The article appears in the November 2016 Issue of *Social Problems*, and is titled "[Transnational Repression, Diaspora Mobilization](#), and the Case of the Arab Spring."

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