

How Does Religious doctrine Affect News: A Discourse Analysis Study

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Abstract

This paper uses discourse analysis to analyze the linguistic elements employed in how two different newspapers report on a certain event in Bahrain. This paper will address the question of what linguistic structures are employed in the two news stories to influence the perceptions of the reader in opposite directions. The two newspapers are published in countries that hold opposing views about the government in Bahrain and the protests taking place on its streets. This paper uses methods of discourse analysis such as thematic analysis, lexical cohesion, naming and macrostructure analysis to interpret how the inclination, bias and loyalties of the newspaper are being conveyed to the reader. The representation in the Saudi Gazette is mainly neutral while it excludes any information that reflects poorly on the Bahraini government or puts it in a negative light. On the other hand, the Tehran Times uses a lot of references to negative actions of the government to discredit it and make the legal amendment appear as a tool of oppression against the Bahraini protestors.

Introduction

Discourse analysis is a method of critically analyzing discourse or text to identify and interpret how language has been employed to convey power relationships among the individuals and groups being discussed. Discourse analysis employs a variety of techniques to study the power relationships as expressed through the use of linguistic elements and structures. Moreover, the role played by the social and historical context also affects how particular discourse is interpreted. The linguistic elements used in studying discourse include the way in which vocabulary or words are used to communicate certain connotations over others. Similarly, the importance of certain events or actors is conveyed by their particular position in the overall structure and arrangement of other elements of the discourse.

This paper will discuss a common story that appears in two different newspapers which influences the political colour attributed to the two stories. The story is about the legal amendments being pursued in the kingdom of Bahrain in response to the political disturbance following the Arab Spring revolt in several Arab countries. Bahrain has also experienced a number of such incidents by members of the Shia majority protesting against the rule of the Sunni minority Khalifa regime. The regime enjoys support from the Sunni-majority Gulf member states such as Saudi Arabia while the protestors have their sympathizers in Shia-majority Iran.

Early in February, the Bahrain government toughened the penalties for publicly offending the Bahrain king, national flag or any emblem representing the kingdom. These penalties are expected to increase the pressure on the protestors and enforce law and order in the kingdom. This development has been reported in regional as well as international newspapers. The Iranian newspaper *Tehran Times* published the news story on 5 February 2014 while the *Saudi Gazette* covered the event on the same day. The proposed study will apply methods of discourse analysis to explore the connotations of the words and sentence structure that have been employed to discuss this event in the two newspapers.

Literature Review

This section discusses the research on media discourse analysis that has already been conducted and will help in the analysis of the selected texts for this paper. Critical Discourse Analysis is a popularly used method of discourse analysis in the media. Based on the Foucauldian concept of knowledge being power, the discourse analysis method analyzes how social and political issues are constructed in media discourse to perpetuate or influence power relationships Van Leeuwen (2009). Language plays a vital role in enabling perceptions to be influenced through the use of lexical elements, syntax and structure. Such use of linguistic

terms in media discourse affects how certain individuals or groups in society are perceived in relation to other groups or individuals (Van Leeuwen, 2009). This method is useful in the analysis of political news stories as the power relations as well as the inclinations of the news producer are reflected in the discourse.

Lexical analysis is one of the methods that will be used in this paper. Matheson (2005) describes how the method has been used in discourse analysis of media texts. According to Matheson (2005), the principle of lexical choice can help to identify the implicit connections that the source of text is trying to make. He uses the term lexical choice to explain that the implicit assumptions and slant of the text can be interpreted by looking at the vocabulary that could have been used in the text compared with vocabulary that is eventually used and frequently repeated throughout the text.

Machin and Mayr (2012) discuss other methods that will be used to analyze the texts in this paper. These are called speech acts and image acts. Speech acts refer to the inclusion of quoted or paraphrased statements made by an individual whereas image acts refer to the use of particular photographs or images in the text. Machin and Mayr (2012) state that speech and image acts can be analyzed in terms of mood systems. In other words, speech or image acts can convey whether the intention is to state facts, make a request, ask a question or issue a command.

Couldry (2000) describes another useful technique of media discourse analysis that will be used in this paper. This technique is called naming and refers to the way in which media brings about its 'differential symbolic power (p. 50).' Naming involves the use of names to generating facts about the social world. Naming affects the degree of trust that the reader reposes in the medium through which information is received. Media can influence the perception of facts by using positive or negative terms during the naming process. The practice of naming by the producer of the media story influences which individual, organization or group the reader eventually sympathizes with. The use of nouns in the two articles will be studied to determine the implicit assumptions and how they are likely to influence the reader.

Another useful technique in media discourse analysis is macrostructure analysis. Van Dijk (2012) describes the utility of macrostructure analysis in media discourse as it aids the interpretation and identification of larger parts of the discourse while naming and lexical cohesion aid the analysis of lower-level structures. This technique aids in understanding the hierarchical schema that forms the structure for the discourse. The technique proves helpful in assessing the coherence of the text such as identification of headlines, leads, introductory sentences, explanatory sentences and concluding sentences (p. 600).

One of the most useful techniques of discourse analysis that will also be employed in this paper is thematic analysis. This method complements other macro-level analytical methods such as macrostructure analysis as it concentrates on identifying the major themes in the discourse and how they are arranged to create a particular effect on the reader (Smith and Bell, 2007). Bryman (2008, p. 580) identifies some methods used in thematic analysis of discourse. These include repetitions, metaphors and analogies, transitions, linguistic connectors and missing data. These elements will be analyzed in the discourse analysis of the two texts.

Marston (2004) points to other aspects of media discourse which are used to present certain viewpoints about the referents. One of these aspects is presupposition. By identifying the presuppositions in the discourse it is possible to distinguish between what is presented as uncontroversial fact and what may be classified as common sense. Another instance is the use of negative lexicalization where there is an abundance of repetitious terms in the news discourse which case there is an attempt to qualify certain terms used in the discourse (Marston, 2004, p.87). Headlines have been deemed as particularly fertile grounds for the use of negative lexicalization. Analyzing which terms have been used with negative qualifiers as opposed to those with neutral or positive qualifiers helps in identifying the direction in which

the news producer desires to orient the reader. Hence, this method will be used to analyze the headlines of the two news stories in this paper.

Transitivity is another useful method employed in media discourse analysis. Bazzi (2009) particularly explains how the method can be used to interpret how authors or editors of news stories in the Arab media employ syntax and other elements of the transitivity system to assign blame or responsibility to certain individuals or groups in a conflict. It involves analyzing how active and passive voice is used in the text as well as the type of agency and nominalization is employed in the discourse.

Opposition is the method used in discourse analysis which studies the way in which linguistic elements are used to stimulate the human tendency to identify individuals and groups as binary opposites. This effect is created by the use of grammatical structures and lexical items such as either...or, neither...nor, etc. Transitions are also used to indicate that the objects being discussed are opposites. This method is particularly useful when covering news stories about political events or conflicts because it is employed to differentiate the parties involved and identify their loyalties.

Problem Statement

This paper will address the question of what linguistic structures are employed in the two news stories to influence the perceptions of the reader in opposite directions.

Research Objectives and Methodology

Following will be the research objectives of this paper:

- To determine how lexical choice influences how the perceptions of the reader are shaped by the two stories.
- To determine how the macrostructure elements are used to project the main argument and bent of the two articles.
- To identify the main themes in the two articles and how they have been presented.

The two stories were selected as they reflect an important political development in the region which can have international repercussions. Not only is it a very important event but it reflects on the image of the region and the country in the international environment. The two newspapers have been selected as Saudi Gazette and the Tehran Times. This choice has been based on their different views and perceptions about the Bahraini government and its relationship with the people.

In order to achieve the research objectives, the methods of thematic analysis, lexical cohesion and macrostructure analysis will be employed. Naming strategies will be analyzed to identify how labeling affects the perception of actors and events in the news articles. The emphasis will be on studying how the producers of the two stories on the same event employ linguistic devices and strategies to further their political affiliations. It is discussed in the introduction section that the Bahraini government is an ally of Saudi Arabia which will be reflected in the way the story is covered in the Saudi Gazette. In contrast, the protestors have sympathizers in Iran which will be reflected in the way the story is presented in the Tehran Times.

Lexical cohesion will be used to determine how the actors and events have been named in the two stories. By using the analysis of opposition, it will be determined which of the two sides are portrayed in a positive light and which of them are presented in a negative light. This will be used to interpret how the reader is likely to be influenced by the two stories and the arguments presented in them. The main actors in the two stories are usually identified as oppressors and victims. The study will compare how each party is presented differently in each story depending on the labels that are ascribed to them.

Macrostructure analysis will be used to analyze the shape of arguments made in each case. The elements such as heading, introductory statement, explanation, transition, etc. will be discussed to identify their effects on interpretation of events. The headlines of the two stories will be compared as they have a lot of clues about the political inclination of the producers.

The structural elements of the stories will also be compared to determine the explicit as well as implicit arguments that are being made in the two stories.

Thematic analysis will be employed in the analysis to identify the main themes in the two stories. This will be an important part of the analysis because it will reveal how the presentation of the story is being used to promote specific desired themes among the reading population.

Discussion of Findings

An analysis of the vocabulary used in the two texts shows the assumptions and implicit ideas being communicated by the producer to the receiver. We begin by looking at the wording of the headline. A difference exists in the headlines under which the news items appear in the two newspapers. In the *Saudi Gazette*, the headline reads 'Bahrain toughens jail time for offending king.' This headline conveys a neutral or positive impression of the event. In other words, the action to which the news item refers appears to be legitimate and fair and within the authority of the government of the country. The act of 'toughening' jail time appears to be fair when compared to the act of 'offending' the king. On the other hand, the headline that appears in the *Tehran Times* says 'Bahrain extremely toughens penalties for protesting king.' This clearly communicates a different perception about the actor, the action and the receiver of that action. In the headline of the *Tehran Times*, the actor or the Bahraini government comes across as an unreasonable and unfair actor who has taken a harsh or excessive measure. At the same time, the reader is also likely to resent the government because it has taken an 'extreme' measure by toughening the penalty. Hence, it may be seen that the Bahraini government is unreasonable and the step it has taken is disproportionate in relation to what it deems to punish. The most interesting part of the headline is when it describes the acts which are being punished. In the *Saudi Gazette* the act is named as 'offending' the king whereas in the *Tehran Times* the action is named as 'protesting' the king. The word 'offending' carries negative connotations and so the government appears to be justified in increasing the punishment for committing such an act. On the other hand, the act of 'protesting' does not carry such negative weight. It is seen to be a legitimate act that is part of the fabric of democratic societies. In using such terms, the *Tehran Times* creates an impression that the Bahraini government is a repressive and brutal government as well as vocally intolerant of democratic values and practices. The reader is going to be more inclined to viewing the government as an oppressor and the 'protestors' as victims while the headline of the *Saudi Gazette* will likely create support for a government trying to enforce order, justice and decency in the society.

Another interesting part of the discourse is that the *Saudi Gazette* makes no reference to the Arab Spring protests while describing the legal amendment. On the other hand, the Arab Spring is the first thing that is referred to right after describing the legal amendment. This has an interesting effect on the reader. In the first case, the reader would perceive that the law is being amended to enforce law and order and to uphold the respect of the government in the society. But the reader would connect the legal amendment to the attempts of the government to curb criticism against the government and silence those people who protest against the government for not giving the majority Shia population their equal rights in power and government.

Both the news stories refer to an incident in 2012 when two citizens were jailed by the government. However, there is a clear difference in how the actor is identified in the two stories. In the *Saudi Gazette*, it is the criminal court that jailed two activists for offending the king. In contrast, in the *Tehran Times* it is stated that 'Bahrain convicted and jailed two activists.' This extends the impression that judicial institutions in Bahrain are controlled by the state or the government; whereas in the *Saudi Gazette* the criminal court is empowered to hear the case, determine whether to convict the defendant and impose the legal punishment. All these references serve to show that the Bahrain regime is totalitarian, autocratic and oppressive on the one hand, while fair and legitimate on the other.

Furthermore, the action of the government is also coloured differently in the two stories. In the *Saudi Gazette*, the 2012 decision to convict the activists was made after Twitter remarks posted by them were 'deemed' insulting to the king. The word 'deemed' conveys the idea that the situation was deliberated and thought over before it was concluded that the remarks were offensive. On the other hand, the *Tehran Times* says that the Twitter comments 'supposedly insulted' the king. This shows that the producer does not believe in the validity of the conviction and hints that the case might not have been given the due deliberation of facts and contextual factors. Rather, it conveys that the remarks were simply felt to be insulting to the king and hence the activists were punished for their act.

The way in which the king is referred to in the two stories also bears some scrutiny. In the *Saudi Gazette*, the king is referred to by his first name as King Hamad once and later on as 'the king' twice. The *Tehran Times* refers to him by his full name King Hamad bin Isa Al-Khalifa once and twice as the 'king of Bahrain.' In the first instance, the use of the first name implies affinity and familiarity with the ruler of Bahrain while in the second case, the use of the full name conveys respect and reflects the use of convention in addressing the ruler of a country.

The news stories also convey their implicit assumptions by the use of voice. In the *Tehran Times*, the amendment is presented as a passive act without referring to who made the amendment to the 1976 penal code, thus making it irrelevant who passed the amendment. On the contrary, the *Tehran Times* clearly states that 'the king of Bahrain has approved a law.' This use of the active voice clearly identifies the actor who perpetuates this excessively tough penalty on legitimate protestors against the government.

The reports also refer to earlier instances when the criminal court had sentenced other Bahraini citizens to jail sentences for violating the law in different ways. As in reporting earlier parts of the story, the *Saudi Gazette* describes the story in neutral connotations by referring to those who were sentenced as 'people' thus implying that no particular aspect of their identity made a difference to the judgment or ruling of the court. Furthermore, the actions of those 23 people are described as 'attacks with petrol bombs' and 'unlicensed protests,' thus indicating that the actions were disruptive and violent in nature as well as against the law. In other words, it is implied that the decision of the court was fair and the punishment is legitimate. The *Tehran Times* paints a different view of the picture. In referring to those who were punished, the term 'activists' is used which connotes positive impressions about people becoming vocal and trying to bring about a positive change in their society. While the actions of the activists are referred to in more or less the same terms as in the *Saudi Gazette*, it is interesting to note the use of the adjective 'alleged' to describe the petrol bomb attacks. In this way, the *Tehran Times* creates the impression that the activists might not actually have carried out the petrol bomb attacks as the allegation could not have been proven in court. Thus, the fairness and justness of the court's decision comes under suspicion and the credibility of the Bahraini state is undermined.

Another interesting difference in the two stories is the use of photographic images. The news story printed in the *Saudi Gazette* appears without any photographic image or illustration. On the other hand, the story in the *Tehran Times* is accompanied by the photograph of the king of Bahrain. This serves the purposes of attaching a face to the story. While it may have been possible to use the picture of the Bahraini flag or a map of the country to identify the context of the story, the use of the photograph of the king identifies the implicit message of the story. It has already been explained that the story is intended to carve out a negative impression about the Bahraini government and its oppressive regime. At the same time, the juxtaposition of the photograph of the Bahraini king serves as a target for directing the negative sentiments of the reader through the power of association.

It is also worthwhile to note that there is considerable difference in the amount of coverage given to the story in the two newspapers. It is clear that the *Saudi Gazette* wants to give reasonable importance to the event. The story is mainly informative in nature and serves

as a narration of what has taken place in the legislative environment of the country. This is illustrated by the fact that only 142 words are used to present the story. On the other hand, the story in the *Tehran Times* is comparatively more analytical as it brings in multiple perspectives including social justice, democracy, freedom of protest, and so on. Experts and analysts are quoted and their commentary is also included to analyze the situation to promote the negative aspects of the government. This is illustrated by the fact that the newspaper conveys the story and its various dimensions in 410 words.

The story in the *Tehran Times* uses the technique of an appeal to authority by bringing in a statement from Rodney Shakespeare who is the chairperson of the Committee against Torture in Bahrain. It is interesting that of all the people whose responses could be included in this story, the opinions of a western man who heads a group working 'against torture' are included in the analysis of the Bahraini government's action. This in itself conveys the impression that the actions of the government raise concern and alarm among those who are against torture, thus suggesting that the new legal amendment is a kind of torture against the Bahraini people. While introducing the statement of the chairperson, the legal amendment is described as 'tightened restrictions on dissent' which again suggests that the legal amendment is oppressive and goes against the spirit and values of democracy. The fact that this aspect is not discussed in the *Saudi Gazette* story is reflective of the fact that Iran is a democratic state while both Saudi Arabia and Bahrain are the quintessential Arab kingdoms of the Arabian Gulf. Hence, it is understandable that the actions of the government are perceived as negative by the *Tehran Times*.

The comments of Rodney Shakespeare further illustrate that the kingdom of Bahrain is nearing its end and the regime will soon be toppled by continued protest. The king and his government are further undermined by the use of negative adjectives such as 'ridiculous' and 'pompous' while the 'activists' and 'protestors' appear to have a legitimate cause for voicing their dissent against the government.

The *Tehran Times* goes further in discrediting the moral authority of the current regime to rule the country. It states that the current king does not derive his strength and authority from the will of the citizens to allow him to govern. Instead, the authority is extorted from the people by using 'poison gas,' 'lead shot,' 'imprisonment,' 'torture,' and 'bullets.' Furthermore, it is even suggested that whatever support towards the present king is visible is merely an illusion. Those who appear to be present in support or those who show any loyalty to the king are described as 'sycophants' and 'placements.' This leaves the king resting on a very thin surface that is supported by a very loose network of self-interested supporters. Moreover, there is also the implied suggestion that these sycophants may be the reason for the eventual end of the Al-Khalifa regime in Bahrain. Rodney Shakespeare concludes with the assessment that it is only a matter of time that the brutal, oppressive and incompetent regime is made to pack up its bags and leave the throne.

Lexical Cohesion

The use of the lexical cohesion in analyzing the two texts throws up some interesting revelations. In the *Saudi Gazette* report, the fact that the earlier punishment for the same offence was only a few days is placed right after stating the new amendment. This heightens the severity of the new punishment and indicates that the earlier punishment was more lenient and probably that was the reason for its being ineffective. Similarly, the fact of jailing two activists in 2012 is followed immediately by the fact that they were convicted of insulting the king. This also supports the idea that the action was justified because it was a result of a proper trial and judicial process. On the other hand, the lexical analysis of the *Tehran Times* story is more interesting. A unique pattern runs throughout the story in which each factual statement relating to the legal amendment is followed immediately by some reference to the Arab Spring or the prevalent dissent in the population. This serves to imply that the amendment has been passed exclusively to curb the right of freedom of speech and dissent in the kingdom. For instance, right after stating that the new law has been approved, the article

refers to the fact that it has been three years since people in the kingdom took out protests against the government. In the same vein, right after mentioning the conviction and jailing of two activists, reference is made to the comment by Rodney Shakespeare which suggests that such decisions could bring about the end of the current regime. This pattern is followed again where the report states the sentencing of 23 activists in a Manama criminal court. Here, the statement is followed by describing the ‘brutal crackdown’ of a ‘popular Bahraini uprising’ in 2011 and the role played by Saudi-led forces in suppressing those protests. The report also mentions that 89 people have lost their lives in the course of the resistance and dissent which is followed up by the comment that such laws would actually serve to strengthen the resistance movement instead of discouraging it.

Thematic Analysis

Thematic analysis of the texts shows a difference in the themes being pursued by the two sources. The story covered in the *Saudi Gazette* identifies institutions such as the criminal court as the main actors, thereby using the authority of the institutions rather than personalities as the justification for the new amendment. On the other hand, the news story in the *Tehran Times* makes markedly more references to the king of Bahrain, the Bahraini state and the security forces of the monarchy instead of making references to the courts or the government. Furthermore, these actors are juxtaposed with verbs that have negative connotations. For instance, it states that the king of Bahrain has approved the amendment to punish those who publicly insult him, thus suggesting that the amendment is designed to serve the interests of the king rather than the interests of the state or the people. Then it states that Bahrain amended its 1976 penal code when referring to the report from the Bahrain News Agency. It is again mentioned in the story that Bahrain convicted and jailed activists rather than saying that the courts convicted and jailed them, which serves to imply that the judiciary system is controlled by the state and is being used as a tool to punish protestors and activists. Other state agents such as the security forces are also portrayed negatively by stating that they were responsible for ‘quashing’ the 2011 ‘uprising.’ Furthermore, the ally of Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, is also shown in a negative light as being a partner of the brutal regime in using force to suppress the protests in the kingdom. On the other hand, the ‘protestors’ are described as being persistently involved in a fight with the brutal security forces, as a result of which 89 people have been killed.

Macro-Structure Analysis

The macro-structure analysis of the two stories reinforces the analysis in the preceding sections. The macro-structure of the *Saudi Gazette* story is based entirely on official information and the immediate context relating to the legislation such as stating what the previous sentence for the offence was and an instance of recently convicting activists for insulting the king. Other than this, there is hardly any sentence that presents the other side of the picture or any other viewpoint. There is however, a reference towards the end about the conviction of 23 people for carrying out petrol bomb attacks and unlicensed protests. This helps to convince the reader that the harsh penalty may be necessary in the light of the current situation.

On the other hand, the story in the *Tehran Times* presents a richer mix of neutral statements and negative references in the macro-structure. Each official statement from Reuters and the BNA is juxtaposed with a counterargument that points to the ineffectiveness of the government in satisfying the needs of the people and resorting to legal and coercive measures to curb dissent. Six sentences in the story relate to stating and describing what the legal amendment is and giving its background to the readers. On the other hand, 11 sentences contain implicit references to oppressive actions of the government in order to draw a connection between the new legal amendment and the use of force by the government to suppress protesting voices in the country. This has been done to reduce the credibility of the Al-Khalifa government by presenting more negative references to the government in the report about a legal amendment. The positive aspects of the legal amendment in promoting

law and order and respect for symbols of the state in public have not been included in the report. This helps to imply that the legal amendment would most likely be used as another weapon in the arsenal of the current regime in conjunction with military force and discrimination. Overall, both the macro-structures of the news stories are not well-balanced and do not represent both sides of the story.

Conclusion

On the basis of the above discussion, it can be concluded that the stories presented in the two newspapers reflect the political affiliations of the two countries. The representation in the Saudi Gazette is mainly neutral while it excludes any information that reflects poorly on the Bahraini government or puts it in a negative light. On the other hand, the Tehran Times uses a lot of references to negative actions of the government to discredit it and make the legal amendment appear as a tool of oppression against the Bahraini protestors. This shows that language can be used in different ways to affect the perception of news by the readers. The techniques of thematic analysis, macrostructure analysis, lexical cohesion and naming all indicate that the effect of linguistic elements has been used to shape the discourse in the desired way.

Appendix

Appendix I: Story published in Tehran Times

Bahrain extremely toughens penalties staff
for protesting king

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On Line: 05 Febr
In Print: Thursday 06 February 2014



The king of Bahrain has approved a law imposing a jail sentence of up to seven years and a fine of thousands of dollars for anyone who publicly insults him, Reuters reported.

The news comes just days before the third anniversary of the Arab Spring-inspired protests against the kingdom's monarchy.

Bahrain amended its 1976 penal code to carry a minimum one-year and

maximum seven-y

ear sentence, including a fine of up to US\$26,000, for "publicly offending the king of Bahrain, its national flag or emblem," state news agency BNA reported. The prison sentence could rise above seven years if the "offense was committed in the presence of the king," BNA added.

Prior to the law change, the same charges against the monarchy carried a minimum sentence of a few days. Bahrain convicted and jailed two activists for one and four months, respectively, in 2012 for Twitter comments that supposedly insulted King Hamad bin Isa Al-Khalifa. Social media comments are included in the new edict. Rodney Shakespeare, chair of the Committee against Torture in Bahrain, told RT that the tightened restrictions on dissent show a kingdom in its final throes. "The only thing it will do is make the Khalifa regime even more ridiculous, even more pompous," he said. "This is something in the last stages of their power, before they get overthrown; in particular, they get overthrown by members of their own side. Also on Tuesday, a criminal court in the capital of Manama sentenced 23 activists to five years in jail for taking part in unlicensed protests and alleged attacks with petrol

bombs, AFP reported. Another activist received three years in jail. In mid-February 2011, a popular Bahraini uprising was eventually quashed one month later by a brutal crackdown by the monarchy's security forces. In addition, Saudi-led forces assisted in suppressing protests in an effort to support the Al-Khalifa kingdom.

Protesters continue to fight with security forces in Shia areas around Manama. At least 89 people have been killed since demonstrations began against the U.S.-supported Al-Khalifa monarchy, according to the International Federation for Human Rights.

Shakespeare told RT that the new offense laws will harden resistance rather than deter further dissidence. [The monarchy's] power comes as a result of poison gas, lead shot, imprisonment, torture, and bullets," he said. "But there's no loyalty given by anyone to the Al-Khalifa, not even from their own sycophants and placements. We are getting information that tells us that everybody now wants them out."

Appendix II: Story published in Saudi Gazette

Bahrain toughens jail time for offending king

MANAMA – Bahrain announced on Tuesday tougher jail sentences for offending King Hamad.

An amendment to the 1976 penal code says that "publicly offending the king of Bahrain, its national flag or emblem" will carry a minimum one-year and a maximum seven-year sentence, as well as a fine of up to \$26,000 (19,260 euros), state news agency BNA reported. The sentence can exceed seven years if the "offense was committed in the presence of the king," the report added, without providing details. Previously, the same charges carried a minimum sentence of only a few days. In 2012, a criminal court jailed two activists for one and four months, respectively, after their conviction for posting on Twitter remarks deemed insulting to the king

Meanwhile Tuesday, the Manama criminal court sentenced 23 people to five years in jail for attacks with petrol bombs and taking part in an unlicensed protest. Another person was jailed for three years. – AFP

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