

**IS IT SAFE FOR TRANSITOLOGISTS & CONSOLIDOLOGISTS
TO TRAVEL TO THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA?**

**Philippe C. Schmitter
Stanford University**

The wave of democratization that began so unexpectedly in Portugal has not merely increased the number of attempted regime changes since 1974, it has distributed neo-democracies over a much wider surface of the globe. No continent or geo-cultural area, no matter how "peculiar" or "backward" or "remote," has been completely immune from the effects of the wave -- although there seem to be two prominent "islands" that have not, so far, been submerged by it: the Middle East and South-East Asia.

This political "Tsunami" has been accompanied (somewhat belatedly) by the gradual and unobtrusive development of two proto-sciences: **transitology** and **consolidology**. The claim of these embryonic sub-disciplines of comparative politics is that by applying a universalistic set of assumptions, concepts and hypotheses, they together can explain and, hopefully, help to

guide the way from an autocratic to a democratic regime. The initial "tentative conclusions" of transitology were limited to a small number of cases within a relatively homogenous cultural area: Southern Europe and Latin America.¹ With the subsequent expansion in the number of transitions and the extension of democratization to other cultural areas, the founders of these two sub-disciplines and their acolytes have had to confront the issue of "conceptual stretching", i.e. of the applicability of their propositions and assumptions to peoples and places never imagined initially.² Nowhere has the resistance to their pseudo-scientific pretensions been greater than among North American area specialists; hence, the subtitle of this article which invites reflection on whether it is safe for transitologists and consolidologists tourists to travel to the world of Islam with their allegedly universal and scientific concepts.

THE ORIGINS OF TRANSITOLOGY

The founder and patron-saint for transitologists, if they were ever to choose one, would have to be Niccoló Machiavelli. For the "wily Florentine" was the first great political theorist, not only to treat political outcomes as the artefactual and contingent product of human collective action, but also to recognize the specific problematics and dynamics of

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regime change. He, of course, was preoccupied with change in the inverse direction -- from republican to "princely" regimes - - but his basic insights remain valid.³

Machiavelli gave to transitology its fundamental principle: **uncertainty**, and its first and most important maxim:

"There is nothing more difficult to execute, nor more dubious of success, nor more dangerous to administer than to introduce a new system of things: for he who introduces it has all those who profit from the old system as his enemies and he has only lukewarm allies in all those who might profit from the new system."

Niccoló Machiavelli,
The Prince, VI.

Furthermore, he warned us that the potential contribution of the discipline would always be modest. According to his estimate, "in female times", i.e. during periods when actors behaved capriciously, immorally and without benefit of shared rules, only 50% of political events were understandable. The other half was due to unpredictable events of fortuna.

Hence, transitology was born (and promptly forgotten) with limited scientific pretensions and marked practical concerns. At best, it was doomed to become a complex mixture of rules of invariant political behavior and maxims for prudential political choice -- when it was revived almost 480 years later.

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THE ORIGINS OF CONSOLIDOLOGY

Consolidology has no such obvious a patron saint. It reflects a much more consistent preoccupation among students of politics with the conditions underlying regime stability. At least since Plato and Aristotle, theorists have sought to explain why -- under the kaleidoscopic surface of events -- stable patterns of authority and privilege manage to survive. While they have rarely devoted much explicit attention to the choices and processes that brought about such institutions in the first place -- this would be, strictly speaking, the substantive domain of consolidology -- they and their empirical acolytes have amassed veritable libraries on the subject of how polities succeed in reproducing themselves over extended periods of time. It does not seem excessive to claim that American political science since the Second World War has been obsessed with the issue of "democratic stability" in the face of class conflict, ideological polarization, Communist aggression, North-South tensions, and so forth.

The consolidologist, therefore, has a lot of "orthodox" theoretical assumptions and "well-established" empirical material to draw upon. However, if he or she has previously been practicing transitology, it will be necessary to make some

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major, personal and professional, adjustments. The consolidation of democracy poses distinctive problems to political actors and, hence, to those who seek to understand (usually retrospectively) what these actors are doing. It is not just a prolongation of the transition from authoritarian rule. Consolidation engages different actors, behaviors, processes, values and resources. This is not to say that everything changes when a polity "shifts" toward it. Many of the persons and collectivities will be the same, but they will be facing different problems, making different calculations and (hopefully) behaving in different ways.

THE SHIFT FROM ONE TO THE OTHER

This suggests possible contradictions between stages of the regime change process and the pseudo-sciences seeking to explain them. The "enabling conditions" that were most conducive to reducing and mastering the uncertainty of the transition may turn into "confining conditions" that can make consolidation more difficult.⁴ The shift in the substance of politics tends to reduce the significance of actors who previously played a central role in the demise of autocracy and enhance the role of

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others who by prudence or impotence were marginal to the demise of autocracy or the earlier phases of transition.

The transitologist who becomes a consolidologist must personally make an epistemological shift in order to follow the behavioral changes that the actors themselves are undergoing. During the early stage of regime transformation, an exaggerated form of "political causality" tends to predominate in a situation of rapid change, high risk, shifting interests and indeterminate strategic reactions. Actors believe that they are engaged in a "war of movement" where dramatic options are available and the outcome depends critically on their choices. They find it difficult to specify ex ante which classes, sectors, institutions or groups will support their efforts -- indeed, most of these collectivities are likely to be divided or hesitant about what to do. Once this heady and dangerous moment has passed, some of the actors begin to "settle into the trenches". Hopefully, they will be compelled to organize their internal structures more predictably, consult their constituencies more regularly, mobilize their resource bases more reliably, and consider the long-term consequences of their actions more seriously. In so doing, they will inevitably experience the constraints imposed by deeply-rooted material

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deficiencies and normative habits -- most of which have not changed with the fall of the ancien régime.⁵

The consolidologist must shift from thinking in terms of this particularly exciting style of politics in which unpredictable and often courageous individuals take singular risks and make unprecedented choices, and adjust to analyzing a much more settled form of "bounded rationality" that is both conditioned by capitalist class relations, long-standing cultural values and ethnic cleavages, persistent status conflicts and international antagonisms, and staffed by increasingly professional politicians filling more predictable and less risky roles. From the heady excitement and **under**determination of the transition from autocracy, he or she must adjust to the prosaic routine and **over**determination of consolidated democracy.

THE LESSONS OF TRANSITOLOGY/CONSOLIDOLOGY

For the limited purposes of this essay, I have extracted and condensed the work on democratization into a dozen "generic reflections" which, I claim, are relevant to understanding the outcome of all contemporary efforts at regime transition and consolidation of democracy -- wherever they are occurring in the world.⁶

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FIRST REFLECTION

Democracy is not inevitable and it is revocable. Democracy is not necessary: neither does it fulfill a functional requisite for capitalism, nor does it respond to some ethical imperative of social evolution. Hence, its consolidation requires a continuous and extraordinary effort. Only after a lengthy period of "habituation", can politicians and citizens look forward to the routinized (and usually boring) perpetuation of stable democracy.

SECOND REFLECTION

Transitions from autocratic or authoritarian regimes can lead to diverse outcomes -- four of which seem generically possible, although their probability varies considerably from case to case: (1) regression to autocracy; (2) creation of a hybrid regime (i.e. dictablanda or democradura); (3) persistence of an unconsolidated democracy; or (4) consolidation of a viable democracy.

THIRD REFLECTION

Each type of democracy has its own distinctive way of consolidating itself -- especially its own rhythm and sequence; no single path to consolidation is necessarily a guarantee for

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the future stability or viability of all types of democracy. In other words, different types have their distinctive problems and vulnerabilities. In the last instance, the success of regime consolidation depends on social structures, the rates and extent of economic change and cultural processes of political socialization and ethical evaluation. But these lie in the distant and unforeseeable future. What counts in the here and now are differences in the point of departure.

FOURTH REFLECTION

In this historical moment -- almost without exception -- democracy (or, better, one or another type of democracy) is the only legitimate form of political domination. Only it can offer a stable consensual basis for the exercise of public authority.

In the past, there were always alternative state regimes that seemed to be viable -- and that were even perceived as more efficacious or desirable by certain social classes or groups. Today, the only competing supplier in the market at that level is the "Islamic State" and it has only a restricted (and unproven) potential clientele.

FIFTH REFLECTION

Transitions to democracy rarely happen in isolation -- i.e. without the simultaneous presence of other demands and other

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processes of profound change in socio-economic structures and cultural values. The circumstances that lead to the demise of autocracies are varied, but invariably involve crises and deficiencies in several institutions and spheres of society. It will be difficult to restrict the agenda of change only to political transformations -- only to changes in the rules of the game, in the access of citizens to participation and in the accountability of rulers.

SIXTH REFLECTION

The eventual outcome of democratization depends in large measure on the sequence with which actors tackle the inevitable multiple transformations that are necessary. This, in turn, hinges on their collective capacity to control the political agenda sufficiently so that choices do not have to be made simultaneously. When the agenda gets saturated and deals with various objectives at the same time, unwanted consequences and unusual combinations tend to emerge at unexpected times.

SEVENTH REFLECTION

Despite a sizeable literature on the so-called prerequisites for democracy, there is only one rule that all consolidologists are likely to agree upon: **it is certainly preferable, if not indispensable, that national identity and**

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territorial boundaries be established before introducing reforms in political (or economic) institutions.⁷ Moreover, there is no democratic way of deciding what should be the effective political unit. It cannot be settled democratically either by normal or exceptional means. Self-determination of peoples or nations is an appealing phrase, but it tells us nothing about how this determination is to be made.

It is a sad fact that modern, consolidated democracy depends on obscure and extremely complicated historical processes that were, themselves, not democratic. These acts of war, marriage negotiation and empire somehow produced physical boundaries and cultural identities that have come to be accepted by their respective populations as appropriate, even natural. Within their "given" confines, these populations agree to practice democracy.

EIGHTH REFLEXION

Democracies tend to emerge "in waves", i.e. they occur during a relatively short time period and within a contiguous geographic area. Participants in the first cases (Portugal and Spain) could not have been conscious that they would be instrumental in forming an eventual wave that would eventually extend to cover almost the entire surface of the earth. Each

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subsequent case, however, is linked to the previous ones through processes of diffusion and imitation. Each success (or failure) in one country creates a "model" to follow (or to avoid).

NINTH REFLECTION

One major implication of this notion of waves is that **the relevance of the international context tends to increase monotonically and to change in intensity with each successive demise of autocracy and attempt to establish democracy.** Those that arrive late are destined to suffer more external influence than their predecessors. While it would be risky to assume that these latecomers will learn from the mistakes of other, it is nonetheless possible that there are certain advantages to "delayed democratization", analogous to those that some economists have claimed for "late developers".

TENTH REFLECTION

This growing internationalization means that **each successive case of democratization contributes to the development of more formal organizations and informal networks for the promotion of human rights, the protection of ethnic minorities, the supervision of elections, the provision of political and economic advice and the creation of inter-professional contacts.** Since 1974, an entirely new

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infrastructure has been created at the international level for the promotion and protection of democracy. By now, there is not a country in the world that even as it begins experimenting with democracy is not literally invaded by associations, movements, party and private foundations, firms and even personalities from the international environment. This network of non-governmental organizations has certainly made some contribution to the fact that the contemporary wave has -- so far -- produced so few regressions to autocracy when compared to previous ones.

ELEVENTH REFLECTION

Moreover, **the very existence of this embryonic "transnational civil society" seems to have influenced the classic-diplomatic behavior of national governments. Those whose citizenries have most supported the efforts of these multitudinous NGOs find themselves obligated to support officially and resolutely efforts at democratization in ways that go beyond normal calculations of "national interest".** Traditional protestations of "non-interference in domestic affairs" have become less-and-less compelling; the distinctiveness between the realms of national and international politics has become more-and-more eroded. Even more significant in the long run may be the increased reliance upon multilateral

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diplomacy and international organizations to bring pressures to bear on remaining autocracies or recidivist democracies.

"Political conditionality" has taken its place alongside the "economic conditionality" practiced so long by the IMF and the IBRD.⁸

TWELFTH REFLECTION

The embryonic sciences of transitology and consolidology have taught us that **it is possible (but not necessarily easy) to move from various types of autocracy to various types of democracy without necessarily respecting the preconditions or prerequisites that political scientists have long considered indispensable for a task of such magnitude and difficulty:**

(1) **without violence or the physical elimination of the protagonists of the previous autocracy.** Although most established liberal democracies did pass through a revolution or a civil war (or both, in the case of the United States) before achieving political stability, today's neo-democracies have frequently managed to consolidate their respective democracies without such discontinuities or loss of life.

(2) **without a great deal of popular mobilization that brings about the fall of the ancien régime and determines the timing of the transition.** Nevertheless, once the transition has

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begun (usually under other auspices), a veritable explosion of mass participation tends to resurrect a dormant or suppressed civil society which, in turn, pushed the change process further than intended by its initiators which, in turn, affects the pace and extent of eventual consolidation.

(3) **without having attained a high level of economic development.** One could even affirm that democratization tends to bring about at least a momentary fall in the rate of economic growth as the price that has to be paid for freedom of assembly and expression, both of which revive long suppressed popular demands. In the longer term, however, these freedoms of action and thought are indispensable for sustained growth.

(4) **without effecting a substantial redistribution of income or wealth.** Most citizens of neo-democracies seem to harbor few illusions about an alternative to capitalism based on radical equality and, therefore, have proven surprisingly tolerant of existing inequalities -- which is not to say that subsequent political competition will not aim at regulating capitalism's accumulative effort and better distributing its benefits.

(5) **without the prior existence of a national bourgeoisie.**
Not only has the existing bourgeoisie rarely been in the

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vanguard of the struggle for contemporary democracy, but it has frequently been contaminated by its close association with the previous autocracy. With the emergence of highly mobile international capital, technology and managerial skills, it is not even as clear as in the past that development is so contingent upon a dynamic group of native entrepreneurs.

(6) **without a civic culture.** How individuals could expect to learn norms of mutual trust, tolerance, compromise and personal efficacy under autocratic rule has always been something of a mystery, but what is becoming increasingly obvious is that democracy is compatible with a wide range of cultural dispositions -- not just those that contributed to its emergence in the first place.

(7) **without (many) democrats.**⁹ What seems to count for more than a normative commitment to democracy or a personal predilection to act democratically is a pattern of group interactions that encourages contingent consent and reduces the boundaries of uncertainty. Once politicians have accepted to compete under specified rules and prove willing to continue playing by these rules, even when they have been defeated, and once citizens assent to these rules and come to accept the intrinsic uncertainty of the outcomes they produce, the minimal

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basis for democracy has been established. Only subsequently is one likely to find more convinced democrats behaving in a culturally civic fashion.

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No one -- least of all among us transitologists-cum-consolidologists -- would question that some or all of the above conditions: non-violence, popular participation, a high level of economic development, greater equality of income, a dynamic and liberal business class, a civic culture and lots of democratically minded individuals are desirable. They may even be essential for the long-term stability of democracy, since they are likely to be produced by its regular functioning. Which is not to say, however, that they are necessary (and they are certainly not sufficient) for the transition to and consolidation of democracy -- which have been our concern in this essay.

THE ISLAMIC PUZZLE

The neophyte practitioners of transitology and consolidology have tended to regard the implosion of the Soviet Union and the regime changes in Eastern Europe, Africa and Asia with "imperial intent". These changes seem to offer a tempting opportunity to incorporate (at long last) the study of these

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countries within the general corpus of comparative political analysis. Indeed, adding these "exotic" neo-democracies to their already greatly expanded case base, transitologists and consolidologists might even be able to bring the powerful instrumentarium of social statistics to bear on the study of contemporary democratization. For the first time, they could manipulate equations where the variables did not outnumber the cases and they could test their tentative conclusions in cultural and historical contexts quite different from those which generated them in the first place.

Needless to say, academic specialists on these geo-cultural areas have tended to react skeptically to the pretensions of such pseudo-scientific interlopers. They have stressed the cultural, ideological and national peculiarities of "their" cases and some would go so far as to bar all practicing transitologists from reducing their countries (now more numerous, diverse and autonomous in their behavior) to mere pinpoints on a scatterplot or frequencies in a crosstabulation.

The lessons or generalizations already drawn from previous transitions and efforts at consolidation in Southern Europe and Latin America and now being made about the difficulties of regime consolidation should ex hypothesi be rejected.

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Presumably, some (as yet unspecified) "new science" of regime change must be invented and applied if one is to make any sense about the eventual political trajectory of these "exotic" attempts at democratization.¹⁰

This brief essay is not the place to debate thoroughly such a contentious issue. My initial working assumption has been that, provided the events or processes satisfy certain definitional requirements,¹¹ they should be considered -- no matter where they occur -- analogous to events or processes happening elsewhere. More than that, they should be treated as part of the same "wave of democratization" that began in 1974 in Portugal and has yet to dissipate its energy completely or to ebb back to autocracy. Hence, all these cases of regime change -- regardless of their geo-political location or cultural context -- should (at least hypothetically) be regarded as parts of a common process of diffusion and causal interaction. Only **after** (and not **before**) this effort at comparative incorporation, mapping and analysis has been made, will it become possible to conclude whether concepts and hypotheses generated from the experiences of early-comers should be regarded as "overstretched" or "underverified" when applied to late-comers. Only then, will we know whether the basins containing different

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world regions are really so interconnected and moved by such similar forces. The particularity of any one region's cultural, historical or institutional matrix -- if it is relevant to understanding the outcome of regime change -- should emerge from systematic comparison, rather than be used as an excuse for not using it.

* * *

The Islamic/Muslim World and, more particularly, the Middle East and Northern Africa pose a different sort of challenge to the potential transitological-cum-consolidological tourist. It lies not in discerning whether a transition from autocracy will eventually result in the consolidation of some type or another of democracy, but whether such a transition has begun or will occur at all.¹² Granted that Turkey does seem to have travelled a considerable distance in the direction of democratization and that some tentative movement toward competitive elections, executive accountability to the legislature and greater political freedom and civic rights has been observed in Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, Morocco and Tunisia; nevertheless, the general pattern is hardly comparable to what has happened in Southern and Eastern Europe or South and Central America. Algeria's change-of-course when faced with the prospect of a victory by

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Islamic fundamentalists in its potentially "founding elections" of 1991-2 is only the most spectacular example of the limits to possible democratization in the area. Sudan and Yemen experienced similar, if less publicized, reversals in the recent past. And no one seems to be even contemplating the likelihood of regime change in this direction in Iran, Iraq, Libya, Saudi Arabia or Syria. With the possible exception of South-East Asia (Burma, Indonesia, Kampuchea, Laos, Vietnam -- and, less clearly, Malaysia and Singapore), no other world region seems to have succeeded in building itself such a barrier against the post-1974 democratic Tsunami.

**CONTEXTUAL AND OPERATIVE DIFFERENCES
BETWEEN THE SOUTH AND THE MIDDLE EAST¹³**

My general plea for employing a universalistic set of assumptions, concepts and hypotheses does not mean that we should ignore sources of variation and even peculiarity across world regions. To the contrary, sensitivity to what is different about the Middle East and North Africa may provide a useful corrective to the contemporary literature on democratization which is so centered on Southern Europe and Latin America. Most importantly, it may encourage comparativists to pay more attention to **contextual factors** that

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have either been previously taken for granted, e.g. the existence of relatively established national identities, the prior establishment of a differentiation between sacred and secular sources of authority or the presence of relatively well-functioning market mechanisms, or to **operative variables** that have been examined and rejected as less important, e.g. the intromission of an external power, the mode of insertion into the world economy, or the existence of a strong trans-national ideology or religion. Below, I propose to list without further elaboration the parametric conditions that seem most likely to affect differentially the advent and outcome of regime change in the Islamic Middle East/North Africa. Since I am not knowledgeable about this part of the world, the best that I can do will be to provide suggestions for further discussion.

Condensing and simplifying, four contrasts stand out:

- (1) in the point of departure;
- (2) in the extent of collapse of the ancien régime;
- (3) in the role of external actors; and
- (4) in the sequence of transformative processes.

Needless to say, these are all somewhat interconnected and could well be assembled under other rubrics.

DIFFERENCES IN THE POINT OF DEPARTURE

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[Place Tables One and Two Here]

Under this rubric, the primary issue is not the "classical" one of differences in level of development, literacy, urbanization, higher education and agrarian structure. As one can see from Tables One and Two, the subset of Middle Eastern/North African countries is not markedly behind the subsets of countries in Southern Europe and Latin America that have democratized recently. From the perspective of those who regard these structural conditions as prerequisites for starting or sustaining democracy, there is no readily apparent excuse for these Islamic countries not to have followed their Mediterranean and Latin brethren. The ME/NA subset is slightly behind on average in urbanization, students per 100,000 population and literacy rates, but as a region it leads both areas in per capita income (less so, admittedly if one eliminates statistically the Kuwaiti and Saudi Arabian outliers) and it is better than Latin America in the "Jeffersonian" dimension of the potential role of family-size farmers. In all cases, moreover, the ranges of variation for each favorable condition overlap. There are always one or two Islamic countries that overlap with the lowest scorers in Southern Europe and Latin America -- and this would have been even more the case had I included the

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recently democratizing countries in Central America.

The indices derived by Tatu Vanhanen do show more of an interregional difference. The degree of decentralization in nonagricultural economic resources (DDN) which he based on estimates of the respective role of public and private ownership of industry and services is considerably lower on the average in the ME/NA group (25) than in the Southern European (53) and the Latin American (31) groups. Moreover, a substantial number of Islamic countries score below the range of variation found in the other two groups: Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Kuwait, Libya, Saudi Arabia, Syria and Tunisia. All of them have a considerably greater economic role of the state -- a feature to which we shall return below.

The Index of Power Resources (IPR) is a summation of all of the allegedly pro-democratic structural conditions. It follows grosso modo from the observation of Robert Dahl that what is really necessary for polyarchy (or liberal democracy) is the diffusion of resources for the potential exercise of power across as great as possible a number of social groups, sectors, classes and persons.¹⁴ To the extent that Vanhanen's IPR index captures this, the ME/NA subset does perform significantly less well than our sample of other recent neo-democracies. Only

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Lebanon with 33.2 has such a favorable profile -- in fact, slightly more so than Spain (32.3) according to this 1980 data.

Otherwise, the next highest Islam scores, Jordan at 10.0 and Turkey at 9.4, are slightly lower than Portugal and Ecuador and about the same as Peru. After this, if one eliminates Paraguay (3.7) and Bolivia (6.1) from the Latin American bunch, all the rest of the Islamic polities would have a more concentrated distribution of (potential) power resources -- with Saudi Arabia receiving an amazingly score of 0.3!

A second feature frequently mentioned, especially by Sovietologists, in stressing differences in points of departure is the previous type of autocracy. They, of course, have in mind the "totalitarian" regimes of the USSR and Eastern Europe, as opposed to the merely "authoritarian" ones of Southern Europe and Latin America. My response to them was that most of these Soviet-style polities had already degenerated before their respective transitions into some form of "partialitarian" regime, not entirely removed from the ways in which their Southern European and Latin brethren were governed.

As for the Middle East and North Africa, there does not seem to exist such a consensus or convergence on exactly what kind of autocracy is being threatened with democratization. For

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one thing, there are several "traditional" forms of monarchy or tribal government that have no counterparts in either Southern Europe or Latin America: Morocco, Jordan, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia - - not to mention, the United Arab Emirates, Oman, Bahrain and Qatar. These are not equivalent to what Juan Linz has (misleadingly in my view) called "sultanistic" regimes, of which there have been several in Latin America: Trujillo's Dominican Republic, Somoza's Nicaragua, Stroessner's Paraguay. Elsewhere, the autocracies that have ruled most of these Islamic societies do not appear to me to have been that different in kind from the "bureaucratic-authoritarian" ones that have governed Southern Europe and Latin America. Some of these dictatorships do seem to have been more internally repressive, more externally aggressive, and to have been rooted in the domination of rather narrow ethnic or clan-like groupings than one was accustomed to seeing in the other two regions, but it is not clear to me that this would necessarily make a major qualitative difference in their resistance to democratization.

What is striking is that when a Latin American (Argentine) or Southern European (Portuguese or Greek) autocracy was defeated in war, this became a trigger for regime change. The same thing happened to Iraq (and to a lesser degree to Iran) and

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the regime managed to survive -- as did Egypt, Syria and Jordan in an earlier and somewhat different context. This at least hints at either a considerably greater legitimacy of authoritarian rule or a remarkably greater efficiency in applying coercion.

In contrasting "my" areas of Southern Europe and Latin America with Eastern Europe and the former Soviet, I concluded that what was most striking about the latter's points of departure was the difference in socio-occupational structures as the result of so many years of policy measures designed to compress class and sectoral distinctions, equalize material rewards and, of course, eliminate the diversity of property relations. Except where a "second economy" had emerged earlier and prospered commercially (e.g. Hungary), Eastern social systems seemed very "amorphous" in their structure and it was difficult to imagine how the parties and interest associations that are so characteristic of all types of "Western" democracy could emerge, stabilize their respective publics and contribute to the general consolidation of the regime. At least until the twin shocks of marketization and privatization produce more substantial and more stable class and sectoral differences, the politics of these Eastern neo-democracies were, it seemed to me,

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likely to be driven by other, much less tractable, cleavages (i.e. ethnicity, locality, personality).

My knowledge of the social and economic structure of the Middle East and North Africa is so deficient that I hesitate to venture an opinion, but I will anyway. It would seem that these countries have all of the class, sectoral and professional stratification that one can expect of a capitalist society at equivalent levels of development and, therefore, they should not a priori have any difficulty in producing the sort of "politics of self-interest and self-organization" that has come to characterize modern democracy.

Which brings me (quite unprepared) to the issue regarding points of departure that seems to dominate the entire discussion in this part of the world, namely, the role of Islam. With the exception of a few who have stressed either an acquired "Marxist-Leninist" political culture or an inherited "Slavic" mentality, most observers of Eastern Europe and the Baltic Republics (but less so of Russia and its Caucasian and Central Asian former republics) do not seem to regard national or religious culture as an insuperable barrier to democratization.

However, there are many "Orientalists" -- not to mention,

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the Islamic fundamentalists themselves -- who have argued that Islamic culture is antithetic to "Western" democracy. Again, I have no reasonable right to opine on this issue, except to observe that those who argued in both Southern Europe and Latin America that there was something as significant and identifiable as an "Iberian" political culture that was intrinsically opposed to democracy, even liberal democracy, were simply wrong. Much of what these observers held to be deeply rooted historical preferences and immutable values turned out to be the product of social coercion, repressive public policy and official propaganda. When the power configuration and regime characteristics changed, these countries responded with behaviors that may have not been identical to such paragons of democratic virtue as the Anglo-Saxons but their newly empowered citizens proved to be surprisingly "moderate", "civic" and even "tolerant" in the exercise of their new freedoms.

Needless to say, nothing assures that "Islamic" political culture will prove to be as adaptable to democracy as "Iberian" political culture was. All I can say with any confidence is to beware of "essentialists" who insist that all cultures are singular, coherent and immutable and that democratic outcomes hinge on some pre-determined compatibility with these allegedly

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singular, coherent and immutable norms.

THE EXTENT OF COLLAPSE OF THE PREVIOUS REGIME

In Eastern Europe, the regime changes were less "pre-announced" and the opposition forces less "pre-prepared" to rule than in the South,¹⁵ but once elections were convoked and governments were formed the role of previous power-holders declined precipitously and significantly. This contrasted with Southern Europe and Latin America where neo-democracies were often governed initially by centrist or rightist parties which contained important elements (and persons) from the previous regime in their ranks, and where de facto powers such as the armed forces, the police or the state bureaucracy retained very significant power to intervene in policy-making and affect the choice of institutions. Spain, Brazil and Chile may be the most extreme cases, but almost everywhere (except for Portugal and, perhaps, Argentina) the transition took place in the shadow -- if not under the auspices -- of the ancien régime.

The few transitions(?) that have begun in the Middle East and North Africa would appear to be even more extreme examples of this pattern. Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, Morocco and Tunisia have all experienced timid versions of what Terry Karl and I have called "transitions by imposition" in which the impetus for

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change comes from within the fragmented ranks of the ancien régime, not from pressures by mobilized opponents or threats of armed insurrection.¹⁶ In this scenario, liberalization precedes democratization and may even be intended to preclude it. Dominant elites not only control the timing, pace and magnitude of reforms, but they are careful to preserve the capacity of existing state institutions, especially those of the armed forces and police.¹⁷

In several of the Latin American cases that began in this fashion (e.g. Brazil, Uruguay, Chile), the incumbents subsequently lost their unilateral control over the process of regime change and were compelled to enter into negotiations with their more moderate opponents. A key element in this shift was what Guillermo O'Donnell and I have called "the resurrection of civil society".¹⁸ The collective response to initial liberalization was a spontaneous mobilizing of non-state organizations to press for further reforms which, in turn, led those in power to proceed much further than they initially intended. Eventually, they found it impossible to resist convoking "free and fair" elections and making the government subsequently formed accountable to the uncertain results of these elections.

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What is so surprising (to me) about the Middle East and North Africa is the weakness of this "resurrection". With the very interesting and instructive exception of Algeria where the convocation of elections did produce an unexpectedly broad popular mobilization, apparently stimulated and channelled by Islamic fundamentalists, in all the other cases the government managed to legitimate itself relatively painlessly by winning "its" elections.¹⁹ It did not have to make further concessions to its opponents, either in terms of a reinvigorated party system or a resurrected civil society. Having manipulated or severed the link between liberalization and democratization, Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, Morocco and Tunisia have (so far) defused the dynamic that so strongly affected their forerunners in Southern Europe and Latin America.

As to why they got away with such a controlled and limited response, I can only offer one hypothesis: the "rentier" nature of the state in these (and other) countries of the region impedes the formation of independent intermediary associations and movements and, even when these do emerge, they are easily coopted and diverted by public authorities.²⁰ Whether it is petroleum or foreign aid or both, the rulers of these countries can count on relatively ample public revenues that do not have

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to be extracted directly and overtly from domestic persons and groups. Quite the contrary, these actors become strongly dependent upon revenues, subsidies and services provided them virtually gratis by state agencies -- from which they have much less incentive to demand accountability. Moreover, if they were to demand further liberalization or even democratization, they might run the risk of finding these public funds cut off, not to mention the possibility of being persecuted by a well-funded apparatus of internal security. If this hunch is correct, the relative weakness or quiescence of civil society in this region of the world is not due to some alleged Islamic impediment to the self-organization of social groups, but to the nature of the state apparatuses that are more autonomous from their respective societies in the way that they capture and allocate resources.²¹

THE ROLE OF EXTERNAL ACTORS

One of the more confident generalizations of the previous literature on democratization emphasized the much greater importance of domestic forces and calculations as opposed to foreign influences and intrusions in determining the nature and timing of regime transition -- hinting, however, at the likelihood that the latter would play a more significant role subsequently in the consolidation phase.²² There seems to be

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virtual unanimity that this was not the case in Eastern Europe (or Central America). Without a previously announced and credible shift in the foreign and security policies of the Soviet Union (or the United States), neither the timing nor the occurrence of regime change would be explicable. Moreover, there is considerable evidence of "contagion" within Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, i.e. of events in one country triggering and accelerating a response in its neighbors.

Unlike Southern Europe and Latin America where democratization did not substantially alter long-standing commercial relations or international alliances,²³ the Eastern regime changes triggered a major collapse in intraregional trade and the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact. Into this vacuum moved an extraordinary variety of Western advisors and promoters -- binational and multilateral. To a far greater extent than elsewhere, these external actors have imposed political "conditionality" upon the process of consolidation, linking specific rewards explicitly to the meeting of specific norms, or even to the selection of specific institutions.²⁴

The ME/NA region is not in a directly analogous situation. Unlike Eastern Europe (or Central America), it has not recently been under the hegemony of a single external power, nor does

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there exist any significant trading arrangement for the area as a whole. Rather, it has been a zone for fierce competition among powers outside the region -- and several of the autocratic regimes within in it owe much of their survival to their ability to play one side off against the other. Perhaps, with the end of the Cold War, the diminished utility of this opportunistic tactic of courting external support will force these regimes to pay greater attention to their domestic sources of allegiance -- and that could improve the prospects for liberalization, if not democratization.

Which is not to say that external factors are not likely to continue to play an important role in the future of democratization within the region. In a part of the world so characterized by repeated wars and protracted high levels of military spending it could hardly be otherwise. The conflict with Israel has provided a more-or-less permanent excuse for authoritarian rule -- and not just in the "Frontline" states. The connection with prospective democratization is made all the worse by Israel's close alliance with some of the leading Western-Liberal democracies. Again, if this international issue were to be resolved, the political space for experimentation with more representative and competitive forms of government

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might well expand. A negotiated settlement to the Turkish-Greek dispute over the Aegean, as well as to other intra-regional disputes, could also contribute positively to regime change at the domestic level.

What is especially puzzling to me is the limited role that "political conditionality" seems to have played in this part of the world. Several Middle-Eastern countries depend very heavily on the support of foreign national and multi-national donors -- and yet these outsiders do not seem to be insisting that the recipients of this largesse conform to the same political norms as when they make equivalent loans to, say, the neo-democracies of Eastern Europe.²⁵ Could this be a hang-over from the previous period when Cold War exigencies made it imprudent to attach such conditions? Or, could it just be that the West's continued dependency on petroleum imports from this part of the world makes it reluctant to demand too much? Or, is this an example of perverse cultural determinism in which the Western donor institutions in effect refrain from making such demands on the grounds that the Middle East/North Africa is simply "beyond the pale" in terms of its capability to support democracy?²⁶

THE SEQUENCE OF TRANSFORMATIONS

In none of the Southern European or Latin American cases

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did the regime change from autocracy to democracy occur alone, in complete isolation from other needed social, economic, military and administrative transformations. However, except for Central America, it was usually possible to deal with these variegated demands sequentially. In some specially favored cases, major structural changes were accomplished under previous autocratic regimes. For example, most of these transitions "inherited" acceptable national identities and boundaries -- even if the degree of local or regional autonomy remained contested. In a few, the military had already been largely subordinated to civilian control or the economy had undergone substantial restructuring to make it more internationally competitive.

In Eastern Europe, not only were such major transformations all on the agenda for collective action and choice, but there was very little authoritative capacity for asserting priorities among them. There was a great deal more to do than in the South, and it seemed as if it all had to be done at once. The codewords were **simultaneity** and **asynchrony**. Many decisions had to be made in the same time frame and their uncontrolled interactions tended to produce unanticipated (and usually unwanted) effects. The absence of historical precedents made it

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difficult to assert theoretically what should come first:
holding elections or forming a provisional government?; drafting
a national constitution or encouraging local autonomy?;
releasing prices or controlling budget deficits?; privatizing
state industries or allowing collective bargaining?; creating a
capital market or sustaining a realistic exchange rate? and the
list could continue ad nauseam.

One thing became abundantly clear -- and this was observed
already in the classic article of Dankwart Rustow that lies at
the origin of much of today's transitology²⁷ -- that without some
prior consensus on overarching national identity and boundaries
little or nothing can be accomplished to move the system out of
the protracted uncertainty of transition into the relative calm
(and boredom) of consolidation.

Potentially democratizing countries in the Middle East or
North Africa would seem to be in a relatively favorable
situation with regard to some of these dilemmas of simultaneity
and asynchrony. With a few exceptions (e.g. Sudan, Yemen), they
have established relatively stable national identities and
recognized boundaries -- despite the rather arbitrary lines
traced in the sand by various imperial powers. One suspects
that many of them could change their respective regimes without

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awakening rival claims to nationhood or territory.²⁸ The Kurdish minority in several adjacent countries is an obvious exception and there are signs of growing self-consciousness on the part of other ethnic minorities that might complicate matters in the future if, say, Morocco or Egypt were to tolerate greater freedom of association and partisan competition. Lebanon is, of course, a case apart on this common identity/boundary prerequisite²⁹ and Iraq seems so badly fragmented along ethno-religious lines in the aftermath of the Gulf War that it would probably split into multiple polities if its rigid dictatorship were even to liberalize, much less democratize, itself.

As for civilian control over the military, tout reste à faire -- except in those traditional autocracies where aristocratic and familistic connections seem to have assured the subordination of military officers to the monarch or dynasty. Provided the process of transition respects the status, if not the arbitrary political prerogatives of these rulers, it may be possible to avoid the omnipresent threat of a coup d'état during the early stages of democratization in such places as Jordan, Morocco, Saudi Arabia and the Gulf Emirates.

As we have seen above with the DDN Index, almost all these countries have a large state-owned sector of the economy which

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might be called into question in the event of a change in political regime. Nevertheless, despite all the inefficiency and corruption that this may imply, I see no reason why the privatization and deregulation of the economy would have to come simultaneously with democratization. Not only is the overall balance roughly similar to that in some countries of Latin America, but the presence of quite substantial revenues from petroleum, foreign aid and remittances should give these Middle Eastern and North African states even more of an opportunity to "buy time" and, thereby, to postpone painful economic measures until after the rules and institutions of competitive politics have been decided upon and consolidated.

EN GUISE DE CONCLUSION

Having considered these four clusters and conceded that some of them do suggest quite significant "inter-regional" differences, I would argue -- as I did earlier for Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union -- that transitologists and consolidologists can travel safely from their familiar haunts in Southern Europe and Latin America to more exotic (and, no doubt, less hospitable) places in the Middle East and North Africa. Until they are taught otherwise by native scholars or their area specialist colleagues, they should stick to their initial

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assumptions, concepts and hypotheses. I believe that they can treat these admittedly weak or prospective cases of regime change -- at least, initially -- as analogous to those that preceded them. Furthermore, I am convinced that if and when transitions from autocracy do begin to take hold seriously in the Middle East and North Africa, these polities will face the same range of possible outcomes -- even if the probability of their success in consolidating some type of democracy in the near future may be considerably less than that of their predecessors in Southern Europe and Latin America.

* FINIS *

TABLE ONE

DATA AND INDICES COMPARING M. EASTERN AND NO. AFRICAN COUNTRIES
WITH SO. EUROPEAN AND LATIN AMERICAN NEO-DEMOCRACIES ca.1980

Countries:	Variables:					Indices:	
	%URB AN	GNP \$	STUD ENTS	%LITE RATE	FAMILY FARMS%	DDN	IPR
MIDDLE EAST:							
ALGERIA	44	2,320	425	45	50	10	03.7
EGYPT	45	700	1724	42	40	20	05.4
IRAN	50	2,590	331	43	44	40	05.8
IRAQ	72	3,020	803	47	35	20	05.4
JORDAN	56	1,640	1250	65	46	30	10.0
KUWAIT	88	17,880	991	68	14	10	04.1
LEBANON	76	1,150	2962	77	48	60	33.2
LIBYA	52	8,480	678	55	40	10	03.5
MOROCCO	41	760	580	29	44	50	03.4
S. ARABIA	67	12,230	662	25	42	10	00.3
SYRIA	50	1,760	1535	53	40	20	06.3
TUNISIA	52	1,290	498	47	48	20	05.0
TURKEY	47	1,240	554	69	68	30	09.4

-							
SO. EUROPE:							
GREECE	62	3,920	1256	92	75	50	21.6
PORTUGAL	31	2,230	932	84	44	40	11.1
SPAIN	74	4,780	1819	94	31	70	32.3

-							
LATIN AMERICA:							
ARGENTINA	82	2,070	1741	95	48	30	17.7
BOLIVIA	33	510	1436	68	31	30	06.1
BRAZIL	68	1,880	1162	76	20	30	08.4
CHILE	80	1,870	1308	92	20	40	17.4
ECUADOR	45	1,420	1321	79	35	30	11.7
DOM. REP.	51	1,370	900	73	30	30	06.9

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PARAGUAY	39	1,410	850	85	12	20	03.7
PERU	67	1,040	1771	80	18	30	09.6
URUGUAY	84	2,490	1248	94	43	40	20.7

SOURCE: Tatu Vanhanen, The Process of Democratization (New York: Crane Russak, 1990).

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TABLE TWO

COMPARING RANGES AND MEANS FROM TABLE ONE BY REGION

	%URB AN	GNP \$	STUD ENTS	%LITE RATE	FAMILY FARMS%	DDN	IPR

MIDDLE EAST NO. AFRICA							
RANGE:	41- 88	700- 17,880	331- 2962	29- 69	14- 68	10- 60	00.3- 33.2
MEAN:	53	4,235	992	51	43	25	06.6

SO. EUROPE							
RANGE:	31- 74	2,230- 4,780	932- 1819	84- 94	31- 75	40- 70	11.1- 32.3
MEAN:	55	3,643	1335	90	50	53	21.7

LATIN AMERICA							
RANGE:	33- 84	510- 2,490	850- 1771	68- 95	12- 48	20- 40	06.1- 20.7
MEAN:	61	1,562	1304	82	29	31	11.3

SOURCE: Tatu Vanhanen, The Process of Democratization (New York: Crane Russak, 1990).

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* ENDNOTES *

1. The most blatant examples of "early transitology" were Dankwart Rustow, "Transitions to Democracy: Toward a Dynamic Model," Comparative Politics, Vol. 2, No. 3, (April 1970), pp. 337-363 and Guillermo O'Donnell and Philippe C. Schmitter, Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Tentative Conclusions about Uncertain Democracies (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986). The latter was based on Southern European and Latin American case studies. For an even earlier compilation exploiting these same countries which, however, did not attempt to draw any conclusions or interpretations, see Julian Santamaria (ed.), Transición a la democracia en el sur de Europa y América Latina (Madrid: Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas, 1982).
2. The locus classicus for this discussion is Giovanni Sartori, "Concept Misformation in Comparative Politics", American Political Science Review, Vol. LXIV (1971), pp. 1033-1053. For a recent updating and extension, see David Collier and James E. Mahon, "Conceptual 'Stretching' Revisited: Adapting Categories in Comparative Analysis", American Political Science Review, Vol. 87, No.4 (December 1993), pp. 845-855.
3. Evidence of my fascination with Machiavelli as a proto-transitologist can be found in my "Speculations about the Prospective Demise of Authoritarian Regimes and its Possible Consequences", Working Paper No. 60, The Woodrow Wilson Center, Latin American Program (1980). This paper was later revised and published as European University Institute Working Paper No. 85/165 (May 1985), and in two parts in Revista de Ciência Política (Lisbon), 1(1985) No. 1, 83-102 and 2(1985) No.2, 125-144.
4. The idea and phraseology has been taken from the seminal article by Otto Kirchheimer, "Confining Conditions and Revolutionary Breakthroughs", American Political Science Review, Vol. LIX (1965), pp. 964-974.
5. Which implies that national differences in consolidation are likely to be greater than national differences in transition.
6. The following "reflections" will be appearing shortly (in German) in Internationale Politik and represent a condensation of

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a more extensive discussion of these points which can be found in "Transitology and Consolidology: Proto-Sciences of Democratization?", paper submitted to the Johns Hopkins University Press for publication in a forthcoming volume to be edited by the Latin American Program of the Woodrow Wilson Center, Washington, DC. (September 1994), 51pp.

7. See Dankwart Rustow, "Transitions to Democracy: Toward a Dynamic Model," for the original discussion of this "requisite".

8. I have explored the issue of conditionality in my "The International Context, Political Conditionality and the Consolidation of Neo-Democracies", paper presented at the SSRC Conference on International Dimensions of Liberalization and Democratization, Overseas Development Council, Washington, D.C., 15-16 April 1993, 29p.

9. This was written independently of (and some years before) the appearance of Ghassan Salamé (ed.), Democracy without Democrats? The Renewal of Politics in the Muslim World (London: I.B. Tauris Publishers, 1994).-- which makes the parallel in thinking even more striking!

10. The above paragraph was largely inspired by a reading of some recent essays by Ken Jowitt who, admittedly, may not be representative of the whole clan of ex-Sovietologists. Moreover, his misunderstanding of the literature on democratization in Southern Europe and Latin America -- especially with regard to the (alleged) ease of transition and consolidation there -- is such that many of the objections he raises simply do not hold. See his "Weber, Trotsky and Holmes on the Study of Leninist Regimes," Journal of International Affairs, (Summer 1991), pp. 31-50 and "The Leninist Extinction" in D. Chirot (ed.), The Crisis of Leninism and the Decline of the Left (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1991), pp. 74-99.

For a more constructive attempt to suggest the "new analytical categories needed to account for the different dimensions of the current transition process (in East Central Europe)", see Grzegorz Ekiert, "Democratization Processes in East Central Europe: A Theoretical Reconsideration", British Journal of Political Science (July 1991), pp. 285-313. Ekiert, while noting the differences, is not so categorical about the need to reject all

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work on other areas. Also Andrew C. Janos, "Social Science, Communism, and the Dynamics of Political Change," World Politics, Vol. 44, No. 1, (October 1991), pp. 81-112 and Russell Bova, "Political Dynamics of the Post-Communist Transition. A Comparative Perspective", World Politics (October 1991), pp. 113-138.

Incidentally, my impression from conversations and meetings with scholars from post-communist societies is that they are much less inclined to reject the relevance of democratization experiences in Southern Europe and Latin America than are North American area specialists. Could it also be that Western "Orientalists" are more skeptical about the putative lessons of transitology and consolidology than scholars and activists from the Middle East/North Africa?

11. As we shall see, all of the (tentative) Middle Eastern/North African cases have exhibited the characteristics of a "transition by imposition" in which the timing, pace and extent of regime change has remained firmly in the control of important elements of the ancien régime. In all of them -- even Turkey -- the point of no return has not been reached. They could relatively easily revert to the statu quo ante or worse. Even though elections were conducted under relatively fair conditions, the governing party or those closely allied with it usually won easily and where this was threatening not to occur (Algeria) the contest was called off. In short, I think that it is still debatable whether a transition from autocracy to democracy has actually begun in Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, Morocco and Tunisia. No one seems to have even posed the question in the cases of Iran, Iraq, Libya, Saudi Arabia or Syria.

12. "While the limits to experimentation with representative democracy are tested and becoming obvious in most newly democratic countries, the islamic regions in general and the Arab world in particular has not, it seems, even had the opportunity to experience this process", Ghassan Salamé. "Introduction: Where are the Democrats?" in Salamé (ed.), op. cit., p. 1.

13. For lack of time and expertise, I have chosen to exploit a general argument and some analytical categories from an earlier essay I wrote with Terry Karl that focused on Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union: "The Conceptual Travels of Transitologists and Consolidologists: How Far East Should They

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Attempt to Go?", Slavic Review, Vol. 53, No. 1 (Spring 1994), pp. 173-189. Both the argument and categories have been revised by me for their application to the Middle East and North Africa.

14. Robert A. Dahl, Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1971).

15. Although it is hard to beat the initial Portuguese case for sheer surprise and unpreparedness to rule! Elsewhere in Southern Europe and Latin America -- except, most notably in Nicaragua -- opposition groups had much more time to anticipate coming to power and even to prepare elaborate contingency arrangements.

On the unexpectedness of the Eastern European transitions, see Timur Kuran, "Now out of Never. The Element of Surprise in the East European Revolution of 1989", World Politics (October 1991), pp. 7-48.

16. "Modes of Transition in Latin America, Southern and Eastern Europe", International Social Science Journal, No. 128 (May 1991), pp. 269-284.

It should also be noted that the third (and historically most prevalent) factor leading to successful democratization: "defeat in international war" was not a factor in any of these cases, with the glaring exception of Kuwait.

17. A report of the (U.S.) National Research Council put this point succinctly: "the workshop participants took the view that political reforms (in the Middle East) are largely the product of the survival strategies of elites rather than broad-based popular aspirations". Panel on Issues in Democratization, Commission on Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education, National Research Council, Democratization in the Middle East. Trends and Prospects (Washington, D. C.: National Academy Press, 1993), p. 6.

18. Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Tentative Conclusions about Uncertain Democracies, (Volume IV), (Baltimore/London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986), pp. 48-56.

19. Kuwait seems the only exception. An electorate consisting of only 6% of the adult population voted in 1993(?) and rejected the candidates supporting the ruling family by a large margin. Nevertheless, this assembly (with very limited powers) was allowed

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to take office. Perhaps due to this negative example, none of the other Gulf monarchic regimes repeated the experience.

20. A rival hypothesis would be that Islam, both as a system of beliefs and a set of practices, precludes the formation of anything resembling an autonomous, secular and self-governing civil society. My reading of Augustus Richard Norton (ed.), Civil Society in the Middle East (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1995), especially the article by Saad Eddin Ibrahim, has convinced me that this is probably not the case.

Space (and ignorance) precludes me from a more detailed look at this issue, but I can only report that my limited reading on the subject of civil society in Islamic/Muslim societies would seem to indicate a considerable potential basis for intermediary organizations ranging from diwaniyyah(?) of traditional origin to modern niqabat(?) or professional associations with cooperatives, religious endowments, foundations, private charities, neighborhood groups, Sufi orders, millat(?) and perhaps even the remnants of the Ottoman guild system inbetween. That these intermediaries are not completely private, independent of the state or antithetic to its purposes does not (in my view) invalidate them as potential units of a civil society, although it does imply that the resultant civil society would not be "liberal" in the Western sense.

21. It is, however, important to note that "rentier" status is not an inevitable impediment to democratization. Terry Karl has shown how this was an integral component of the success of "pacted democratization" in Venezuela. For my awareness of the importance of these issues, I am especially indebted to her The Paradox of Plenty: Oil Booms, Venezuela and Other Petro-States (Berkeley: University of California Press, forthcoming).

22. For the initial observation, see Guillermo O'Donnell and Philippe C. Schmitter, op.cit., pp. 17-21. It should be noted that the cases upon which this generalization was based did not include those of Central America. In that sub-region, external influence and intromission has been (and continues to be) much more significant.

For a criticism with regard to Southern Europe, see Geoffrey Pridham (ed.), Encouraging Democracy: The International Context of

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Regime Transition in Southern Europe (Leicester: Leichester University Press, 1991).

23. Greece's (temporary) withdrawal from NATO is a minor exception -- counterbalanced by Spain's (contested) entry into NATO. The decision by all of the Southern European countries to become full members of the EC did not so much alter existing patterns of economic dependence as intensify them.

For an assessment of the impact of democratization upon regional security, cooperation and integration in the Southern Cone of Latin America, see Philippe C. Schmitter, "Change in Regime Type and Progress in International Relations" in E. Adler and B. Crawford (eds.), Progress in Postwar International Relations (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), pp.89-127.

24. This issue I have discussed at greater length my "The International Context for Contemporary Democratization", Stanford Journal of International Affairs (Vol. II, Issue 1 (Fall/Winter 1993), pp. 1-34.

25. With the end of the Cold War, the decline in oil revenues and rising resistance to foreign aid, the Western powers and their multi-lateral institutions may have begun to insist on greater economic orthodoxy and "good governance" on the part of their Middle Eastern and North African clients. It is too early to tell whether this conditional demand for economic liberalization will translate eventually into political liberalization. So far, there is not much evidence of strong linkage in such places as Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Tunisia and Syria where reforms in economic policy induced from without have not provided a significant impetus to political reform -- rather, the former has been invoked to demonstrate that continued authoritarian rule is necessary!

26. To the above general observations about the external context, one could add another, more specific, condition: namely, the sheer fact that the Middle East and, especially, North Africa is located in such close geographic proximity to centers in Western Europe of much greater prosperity and security. This makes the "exit option", especially for relatively skilled persons, much easier. On the one hand, this threatens to deprive these emergent democracies of some of their most highly motivated actors and to leave their consolidation in the hands of less talented ones; on

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the other hand, the very prospect of such a mass exodus increases the prospects for their extracting external resources intended, precisely, to prevent that from happening.

27. "Transitions to Democracy", Comparative Politics 2 (1970), pp. 337-363.

28. I realize that I am treading on thin ice here. For example, Ira Lapidus in his classic A History of Islamic Societies (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), p. 637 has concluded that "In this region, Europeans defined the structure of Arab states. While Arab national identity took form in the twentieth century it was replete with contradictions among cultural and ideological identities, and majority and minority interests".

29. "Lebanon, manipulated by outside forces, has not been able to create a concept of state and society which transcends the factional and sectarian divisions of the country", Ira Lapidus, ibid., p. 658.