RESEARCH PAPER

No. 153

JULY-AUGUST 2011

DEMOCRATIC TRANSITION, DOMESTIC POLITICS, AND THE "UNDEMOCRATIC" PEACE

VASSILIOS DAMIRAS

(RIEAS Regional Director in USA, Defense and Counterterrorism Expert)

RESEARCH INSTITUTE FOR EUROPEAN AND AMERICAN STUDIES (RIEAS)

 # 1, Kalavryton Street, Ano-Kalamaki, Athens, 17456, Greece
RIEAS URL:http://www.rieas.gr

RIEAS MISSION STATEMENT

Objective

The objective of the Research Institute for European and American Studies (RIEAS) is to promote the understanding of international affairs. Special attention is devoted to transatlantic relations, intelligence studies and terrorism, European integration, international security, Balkan and Mediterranean studies, Russian foreign policy as well as policy making on national and international markets.

Activities

The Research Institute for European and American Studies seeks to achieve this objective through research, by publishing its research papers on international politics and intelligence studies, organizing seminars, as well as providing analyses via its web site. The Institute maintains a library and documentation center. RIEAS is an institute with an international focus. Young analysts, journalists, military personnel as well as academicians are frequently invited to give lectures and to take part in seminars. RIEAS maintains regular contact with other major research institutes throughout Europe and the United States and, together with similar institutes in Western Europe, Middle East, Russia and Southeast Asia.

Status

The Research Institute for European and American Studies is a non-profit research institute established under Greek law. RIEAS's budget is generated by membership subscriptions, donations from individuals and foundations, as well as from various research projects. The Institute is autonomous organization. Its activities and views are independent of any public or private bodies, and the Institute is not allied to any political party, denominational group or ideological movement.

Dr. John M. Nomikos
Director

RESEARCH INSTITUTE FOR EUROPEAN AND AMERICAN STUDIES (RIEAS)

Postal Address:

 # 1, Kalavryton Street

Alimos, Athens, 17456, Greece

Tel/Fax: + 30 210 9911214

E-mail: rieas@otenet.gr

James Bilotto, CBRN Chief Operating Officer
Prof. Anthony Glees (PhD), Director, Center for Security and Intelligence Studies, Buckingham University
Prof. Vasilis Botopoulos (PhD), Chancellor, University of Indianapolis (Athens Campus)
Prof. Peter Gill (PhD), University of Salford
Andrei Soldatov (MA), Journalist, Editor of Agentura.ru (Russia)
Chris Kuehl, Armada Corporate Intelligence Review
Zweiri Mahjoob (PhD), Centre for Strategic Studies, Jordan University
Meir Javedanfar (PhD), Middle East Economic-Political Analysis Inc.
Luis Oliveira R., International Aviation Security and Special Operations (Portugal)
Daniele Ganser (PhD), Basel University
Prof. Siegfried Beer (PhD), Director, Austrian Centre for Intelligence, Propaganda and Security Studies
Prof. Herman Matthijs (PhD), Free University of Brussels
Prof. Michael Wala (PhD), University of Munich
Prof. Wolfgang Krieger (PhD), University of Marburg
Michael Tanji, Director at Threatswatch.org - (OSINT)
Prof. Ioannis Mazis (PhD), University of Athens
Robert Nowak (PhD Cand), Institute of History of the Polish Academy of Sciences, Bureau of the Committee for Special and Intelligence Services (Prime Minister's Chancellery)
Lauren Hutton (PhD), Researcher, Institute for Security Studies (South Africa)
LTC General, Prof. Iztok Podbregar (PhD), University of Maribor, Former National Security Advisor to the President of the Republic of Slovenia, Former Chief of Defense (CHOD), Former Director of the Slovenian Intelligence and Security Agency, Former Secretary of the Slovenian National Security Council.
Prof. Gregory F. Treverton, (PhD), Senior Policy Analyst, Pardee RAND Graduate School
David Jimenez (MA), American Military University (American Public University System)
Sebastien Laurent (PhD), Universite Michel de Montaigne, Bordeaux
Warren Tamplin, (MA), OSINT Officer, Australia
Col (ret) Jan-Inge Svensson, Swedish Military Academy
Prof. M.L. Maniscalco (PhD), University of Rome (Tre)
Anat Lapidot-Firilla (PhD), The Van Leer Jerusalem Institute
Julian Droogan (PhD), Editor, Journal of Policing, Intelligence and Counter Terrorism, Macquarie University, Australia.
Panayotis A. Yannakogeorgos (PhD), Rutgers University
Prof Antonio Diaz, (PhD), University of Burgos, Spain
Prof. Thomas Wegener Friis (PhD), University of Southern Denmark
Prof. Ake Sellstrom (PhD) European CBRNE Center, Sweden
Prof. Rudiger Lohlker (PhD), University of Vienna
Com. Ioannis Chapsos HN (PhD Cand.) Hellenic Supreme Joint War College
Demitrios Krieris (MA), Police Major, Hellenic CEPOL Unit

Research Associates

Prem Mahadevan (PhD), Indian Counter Intelligence Studies
Leo S. F. Lin, (MA), Foreign Affairs Police Officer in Taiwan (R.O.C)
Ioannis Konstantopoulos, (PhD), Intelligence Studies
Spyridon Katsoulas, (PhD Candidate) Greek-American Relations
Ioannis Kolovos (MA), Illegal Immigration in Greece
Liam Bellamy (MA), Maritime Security (Piracy)
Naveed Ahmad (MA), South-Central Asia and Muslim World
Ioannis Moutsos (MA), Independent Journalist
Nadim Hasbani (MA), Lebanon-Syria and North African States
Nikos Lalazisis (MA), European Intelligence Studies
George Protopapas (MA), Journalist, International Relations Researcher
Roman Gerodimos (PhD Candidate), Greek Politics Specialist Group in UK
Nico Prucha (PhD Cand), Jihadism on Line Studies

RESEARCH PAPER

No. 153

JULY-AUGUST 2011

DEMOCRATIC TRANSITION, DOMESTIC POLITICS, AND THE "UNDEMOCRATIC" PEACE

VASSILIOS DAMIRAS

(RIEAS Regional Director in USA, Defense and Counterterrorism Expert)

In the half of the twentieth century since the Second World War, several waves of democratization have occurred. At the end of the century, all the European continent, various countries of the African continent, the Central and Latin America, and parts of Asia experienced a new era of democratization. Such a rosy depiction, nonetheless, must be analyzed and explained by the internal socio-political challenges these democracies face their behavior toward each other. In some historical case studies, the democratic transition/consolidation phases have provoked serious crises, characterized by deterioration of civil liberties and political rights, and by press censorship, as for example happened under the Boris Yeltsin and Vladimir Putin administrations in Russia, and in some nation-states of Central and Latin America. Therefore, as democratization expands across the globe, democratic institutions are fraught with the very problems they aim to resolve and eradicate. This research paper presents the complexities of democratization, and will argue that in some cases, the transition to democracy causes newly democratizing nation-states to behave in an aggressive manner toward one another.

The study of regime change from authoritarianism to democracy has dominated the fields of history and international relations in the past two decades, but primarily from the 1990s forward. It emerged some years ago as an outgrowth of comparative politics and political sociology. Since then, it has generated associated schools of thinking such as constructivism, structure-agent theory, rationalist theory, and critical theory, whose proponents have engaged in a scholarly battle over the socio-political conditions in which new democracies developed.[1]

Dominant Theoretical Frameworks

Transitology and Consolidology

A newer sub-discipline in history and political science, transitology and consolidology, is the most effective in explaining the process of political transition to democracy and the consolidation of newly emerging democracies. One significant dichotomy among transitologist theorists is the formal or procedural conception of democratic principles and the substantive conception of democracy. This significant theoretical difference has influenced historians and political theorists at a fundamental level as it demarcates the terminology and definitions of the change process from an authoritarian regime to a democratic one.[2]

Specifically, formal or procedural democracy incorporates procedures and processes, establishing rules and institutions for the political purpose of what Joseph A. Schumpeter called, in his definition of democracy, "arriving at political decisions in

---

[1] Geoffrey Pridham, *The Dynamic of Democratization: A Comparative Approach* (New York: Continuum, 2000), 1.

[2] Ibid., 1.

which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for the people's vote." The most significant presentation of this idea was Robert A. Dahl's concept of polyarchy, which envelops not only political competition and participation but also varying socio-political forms of pluralism, and freedom of expression regarding political tendencies.[3]

Substantive democracy can be defined as an avenue for regulating power relations so as to maximize fully the socio-economic and political opportunities for individuals to affect the micropolitical processes in the socio-political milieu. Substantive democracy encompasses formal democracy, including its characteristics within its expanded criteria for qualitative testing of a wider range of democratic principles. Its supporters argue that established, formal procedures are a necessary but not sufficient condition for the transition and consolidation of democracy. They further argue that democracy cannot be reduced to only its formal or institutional aspects. The imputation is that some regimes may fulfill the requirements of a formal democracy but in actuality fall short of full-fledged liberal democracies. Furthermore, it is postulated that the qualitative aspects of substantive democracy are most significant in the successful consolidation, although not necessarily the transition, of a democratic regime.[4]

Thus, it is important and constructive to analyze each version of democracy as part of a procedural evolution leading to, if not closely interlaced with, the other. The criteria for formal democracy are quite broad. The theoretical scheme of Mary Kaldor

---

[3] Joseph A. Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy* (New York: Harper, 1947), 269; Robert A. Dahl, *Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1971), 3.

[4] Mary Kaldar and Ivan Vejvoda, "Democratization in Eastern and Central European Countries," *International Affairs* 73, no. 1 (1997): 92.

and Ivan Vejvoda, promoting the procedural conditions originally conceived by Dahl, outlined the following criteria of a formal democracy: inclusive citizenship, the rule of law, separation of powers, elected power-holders, free and fair elections, freedom of expression and alternative sources of information, associational autonomy, the right of various political leaders to compete for public support and votes, various public outlets for information, institutions for making government depend on electoral participation and other civic engagement, and civilian control over the security forces. These criteria open the door to the substantive aspects of democracy associated with deeper dimensions of socio-political life. These include the significant role of political parties and their influence on political participation. They also encompass the role of the media and their representations of broad political debate; the response of local government to specific or local concerns; the role of the individual as *homo politicus;* and, not least, the presence of an active civil society, including independent socio-political associations, that may serve to check abuses of and by the government.[5]

When one considers regime change, the criteria of a formal democracy are important to regime transition when the transitional democracy's requirements are largely obtained through constitutional settlement and other rules that come out of this inaugural period. Thus, the shift in democratization studies to an analysis of regime consolidation has focused on debate that goes well into areas of substantive democracy. The broader scholastic concerns that arose from issues relevant to democratic consolidation had indisputable ramifications for theory building. To some extent, this has led to reexamination of structural approaches concerned with socio-political and socio-

[5] Kaldar and Vejvoda, 63.

economic conditions and functions, if only because they are deemed to have some significance and relevance to the longer-term evolution involved in democratic consolidation. Transition, by contrast, is often a relatively brief political process, lasting a few years, with the exception of embryonic democracies that fail to move forward into the consolidation phase. Thus, adopting actor-based theoretical approaches unacceptably restricts the scope of democratic regime change theory and may result in a failure to account for crucial aspects of the transitional period.[6]

There are three schools of thought regarding regime change: the functionalist, the transnational, and the genetic. These focus, respectively, on socio-economic and socio-political structural conditions, international influences and political trends, and political elite strategy and decision-making. Grouping them in this specific way is not intended to stereotype them but rather to indicate their potential strengths and weaknesses and, additionally, their inter-compatibility.

Functional Theories

Functionalist theoreticians center their research on economic, social, and cultural preconditions for the foundation of democracy. The basis of their argument is drawn from modernization theory in dealing with socio-economic development. Anthony Smith is its leading proponent. The twin focal points of this theory are economic development and social mobilization, the original theoretical approaches to regime change. These foci were not initially conceived for regime change analysis but as a contribution to the evolution of democratic studies. The primary observations were that some societies were not as ready

[6] Kaldor and Vejvoda, 66-67.

for democracy as others, and that the chances of a successful and viable democratic nation-state depended significantly on the level of socio-economic evolution and development. This argument was influenced by the fact that the longest-lasting democratic regimes were West European and Anglo-American countries with highly developed, capitalist socio-economic systems. The chief supporter of this theoretical view was Seymour Martin Lipset, whose article on social requisites of democracy in 1959 is commonly viewed as the start of transitology. While Lipset has been the name most associated with functional theories, others scholars have contributed in important and influential ways, including Daniel Lerner and Karl Deutsch.[7]

A significant theoretical assumption of this school is that modernization produces value changes that favor the democratization process. From this assumption, a political-cultural version of functionalist theory developed. According to this version, some political cultures are more susceptible to establishment and development of democratic values and beliefs than others, as specific mass orientations must be present before it is possible for a nation to embark upon a democratic process. In their pioneering theoretical work on the nexus between political culture and democracy, Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba developed the theme of civic culture, which included a requisite high level of trust among the public as well as general or diffuse support for democratic institutions, processes, and practices. The latter was perceived as providing a generous reservoir of political support that would allow a new democratic regime to survive and sustain

---

[7] Daniel Lerner, *The Passing of Traditional Society: Modernizing the Middle East* (New York, NY: The Free Press, 1958); Seymour Martin Lipset, "Some Social Requisites of Democracy: Economy Development and Political Legitimacy," *American Political Science Review* 53, (March 1959): 69, 105; Seymour M. Lipset, *Political Man: The Social Bases of Politics* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1960); Karl Deutsch, "Social Mobilization and Political Development," *American Political Science Review* 60, no. 3 (1961): 493-514.

occasional crises of confidence due to serious policy failure or authoritarian socio-political challenges. In addition, these scholars argued that the Anglo-American and Western European cultures are conducive to democratic values.[8]

Functionalist theories have significantly emphasized the overriding significance of prerequisites. A more recent example of this is the work of Tatu Vanhanen on the distribution of power resources, including economic and intellectual, which, when widespread, produces suitable socio-political conditions favorable to democratic development. Vanhanen's approach stresses that environmental factors such as shared needs, knowledge, and interests shape the social milieu, which includes unified or disunified political institutions, standards of living, ethnic or sectarian conflicts, resource utilization or depletion, and the rise of radical/fundamentalist ideologies. Robert Kaplan's work also supported the aforementioned argument.[9]

Over time, functionalist experts engaged in more refined and complex approaches. Typical of this was Dahl's theoretical approach to democracy, which is called polyarchy. Polyarchy highlights convoluted sets of factors affecting democratic development. Among these are historical sequences, levels of socio-economic evolution, concentrations of power, various socio-economic inequalities, subcultural rifts, socio-political beliefs, and foreign domination. By contrast, Francis Fukuyama's end-of-history thesis is to some extent a simplified argument related to modernization theory, claiming

---

[8] Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba, *The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1963).

[9] Tatu Vanhanen, *The Process of Democratization: A Comparative Study of 147 States, 1980-1988* (New York: Crane Russak, 1990); Tatu Vanhanen, *Democratization: A Comparative Study of 170 Countries* (New York: Routledge, 2003).

historical trends compel all societies across the globe to resemble each other in their adoption of one version or other of democratic ideas, beliefs, and institutions.[10]

These theories of the democratic process have been criticized for being overly deterministic, adopting and promoting a linear view of socio-political development, and focusing too much attention on material factors. Seymour Martin Lipset, Kyoung-Ryung Seong, and John Charles Torres in particular were attacked for their apparent lack of scholarly sophistication in failing to present multivariate analyses. Even more, it was viewed as unhelpful that their theoretical approach was empirically vulnerable to serious questions on a variety of grounds largely arising from a series of worldwide democratic reversals in the 1960s and 1970s. However, Lipset et al. set up a crucial academic debate that inspired others, if only in response, to contribute new ideas to the fledging area of democratization studies. One common reaction was to stress the important role played by political choice. Nonetheless, other scholars have continued to find significant validity in the nexus between economic evolution and democratic values.[11]

Such a connection has been reexamined and rehabilitated in recent years owing to the global shift to democracy in the 1990s following the fall of communism. There are empirical studies which asserted the correlation between economic development and the evolution of democracy in post-Communist nations such as Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, and Slovenia. This new evidence has significantly strengthened modernization theory as compared to works from the late 1950s when Lipset produced his original

---

[10] R. Dahl, *Polyarchy*; Francis Fukuyama, *End of History and the Last Man* (New York: The Free Press, 1992).

[11] Seymour Martin Lipset, Kyoung-Ryung Seong, and John Charles Torres, "A Comparative Analysis of the Social Requisites of Democracy," *International Social Science Journal* 45, no. 2 (1993): 155-175.

article. Dankuart A. Rustow has called this process "deeper layer" analysis of socio-economic conditions in order to consider their complex interactions with socio-political democratization. While this debate is ongoing, the original claims of the modernization theories have been significantly scaled down from causality assertions (e.g., economic development being a main reason for the appearance of democracy) to environmental assertions, which argued that economic development produced certain conditions susceptible to democratic values. These alterations in the theory coincide with views that economic development may not be a necessary prerequisite for democratic transition, but they correlate well with the strength of democracy, and thus with the socio-political consolidation process.[12]

Transnational Theories

Transnational theorists have a broad, semi-historical approach in common with the functionalist approach; however, transnational theories developed from the latter toward a more complicated and complex array of historical factors in analyzing and explaining the democratization process. For example, structural traits, such as socio-economic conditions and circumstances, have come to be perceived as being strengthened in their transmission through transnational diffusion proclivities. The central focus of the transnational theorists tends to be international trends, which are identified as permeating borders to influence domestic socio-political change and are thus labeled transnational.

[12] Dankuart A. Rustow, "Transitions to Democracy: Toward a Dynamic Model," *Comparative Politics* (April 1970): 343.

This approach attempted to significantly improve the modernization theory's view on regime change.[13]

Samuel P. Huntington tries to explain the transition to democratic regimes in specific terms of economic, cultural, social, and exogenous tendencies, and created the prominent theory of waves of democratization. Huntington explains a wave as a group of transitions from nondemocratic to democratic polities that happens within a specific time period, and that in a crucial way outnumbers transitions in the opposite direction during the relevant historical time. The theoretical presumption is that some kind of snowball effect appears to occur as an important outcome of transnational influences, actions, interactions, and geopolitical proximity. He elaborated on the contributing factors in waves, incorporating a democratic effect, which, in other historical contexts, has been also termed contagion, diffusion, and emulation. In previous analyses in the transitions historiography, such ideas had been explained as backgrounds and socio-political conditions. However, a historical trend is examined that could play an active part in the democratization activity. Especially significant in the recent wave of democratization has been the vast development and expansion of global transportation and communication, in which the phenomenon of a global democratic revolution has influenced leaders across the globe and has created a phantasmagoric atmosphere for democratization.[14]

Nonetheless, this approach has a theoretical lacuna in estimating cause and effect in terms of empirically supporting external and internal interactions. Exactly what are the

---

[13] John B. Londregan and Keith T. Poole, "Does High Income Promote Democracy?" *World Politics* 49, no.1 (1996): 1-30.

[14] Samuel P. Huntington, *The World Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991).

socio-political conditions that permit diffusion to produce positive results? The theoretical term "wave" has more descriptive value than analytical merit; it may be perceived as no more than an observation of a socio-political process occurring simultaneously in the same or different parts of the globe. In addition, the application of the term "third wave" to all transitions that have occurred since the Portuguese transition in April 1974 abridges its importance and meaning. Nonetheless, the focus in the globalization historiography on decline in state authority and the significant expansion in transnational forces could likely identify vital elements regarding domestic socio-political regime change. Still, globalization research studies may well overstate the importance of greater political interdependence in analyzing the various democratization patterns.[15]

Genetic Theories

Genetic theoretical approaches differ from the functionalist and, to some extent, from the transnational theories. They stress the sensitive phase of transition. It is the manner by which transitions succeed that safeguards regime outcomes, not necessarily structural preconditions. Genetic thinking focuses on the specific dynamics of the process and produced conceptual references for assessing individual cases of regime change. It has also explored the connection between authoritarian collapse and the transition, in contrast to consolidation prospects and processes. As has been noted, however, its primary concern has been the transition to, rather than the consolidation of, liberal democracies.

Genetic theories were formulated in response to various critiques of functionalist theories from the 1960s; they reflected their origin in political science rather than

[15] David Held, *Democracy and the Global Order* (Cambridge, CT: Policy Press, 1995).

sociology where early-stage functionalist theorizing took place. This departure resulted in a rejection of Marxist thinking, which stressed objective socio-economic criteria over subjective ones like political strategy. The stimulus for evolving and developing genetic ideas, and for applying them to empirical research work, was born with the transitions in the three Southern European nation-states of Greece, Portugal, and Spain beginning in the mid-1970s. They have since been utilized for analysis of other regions of the globe, specifically Latin America, thereby creating new avenues of research.[16]

Genetic theories are can be traced back to Rustow's article in *Comparative Politics* in 1970. This was not elaborate theory building, but it created a range of insights and working hypotheses on which later actor-based interpretations of transition process were grounded. In trying to obtain answers to the question of what specific conditions make a move to democracy possible, Rustow argued that a model of transition does not require democratic evolution be a steady process, homogeneous over time. He criticized previous theories focused on the notion of temporal continuity and linear correlation "…which seems to lurk behind much of the literature of the Lipset-Curight genre." Rustow perceived that conflict is particularly innate to democratic values, and that "… a dynamic model of the transition must allow for the possibility that different groups—e.g.,

[16] Philippe C. Schmitter, "An Introduction to Southern European Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Italy, Greece, Portugal, Spain, and Turkey," in Guillermo O'Donnell, eds, Philippe C. Schmitter, and Lawrence Whitehead *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Prospects for Democracy* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986), 3-10; Lawrence Whitehead, "Three International Dimensions of Democratization," in Lawrence Whitehead, ed., *The International Dimensions of Democratization: Europe and the Americas* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 3-25.

now citizens and now rulers, now the forces in favor of change and now those eager to preserve the past—may furnish the crucial impulse toward democracy."[17]

Moreover, Rustow argued that rather than the need to first nurture democrats in order to promote democratic ideas, "… we should allow for the possibility that circumstances may force, trick, lure or cajole non-democrats into democratic behavior, and that their beliefs may adjust in due course by some process of rationalization or adaptation."[18]

Other scholars further developed Rustow's theoretical idea into a more refined theoretical approach that became well known as the "pact school," in reference to the main emphasis on the necessity of elite accommodation during transitions periods. Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan studied the role of political leadership in the breakdown of democracy. Adam Przeworski, with his clear distinction between hardliners and softliners in the collapse of authoritarian regimes, elaborated on Rustow's original genetic theory, as did Scott Mainwaring and Donald Share's transitional model of transition. Giuseppe Di Palma's arguments on political crafting in the process towards democratization expanded on Rustow's concepts and contentions as did John Higley and Richard Gunther's work regarding elite settlements and elite convergence. Despite these later works, the most well known product of the pact school remains the 1986 comparative research study of transitions to democracy, in Guillermo O'Donnell, Phillipe C. Schimtter, and Laurence Whitehead's *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Prospects for*

---

[17] Rustow, "Transitions to Democracy," 337-363; The reference to Phillips Cutright was to his article "National Development: Measurement and Analysis," *American Sociological Review* 28, (April 1963), 253-264.

[18] Ibid., 345.

Democracy. The authors examined elite influence on the democratization process in Southern Europe and particularly in Latin America.[19]

Pactism creates a number of assumptions, the most dominant being that it is individual action by various leaders of socio-political groups who execute strategic calculations and engage in pragmatic choice. Clearly, the theoretical emphasis here is on mitigating political demands and on the exchange of mutual benefits. According to Di Palma, pacts are employed in three ways: first, to introduce restraint and encourage civility, along with curbing violence and regression by the state and/or civilians; second, to enable an "orderly exit from diverse times", and third, to "constrain politically motivated behavior that clearly undermines democratization." [20]

Theoretical work on elite settlements and transition is undoubtedly in the spirit of this conceptual argument. In this idea of political crafting, which centers on the style and means whereby elite settlements are executed, there is an obvious emphasis placed on the quality of socio-political leadership. This concept appears optimistic, although Di Palma argues, "Greater investment in crafting (so as consciously to steer clear of repeated authoritarian involutions) can open novel possibilities for democracy in contexts previously deemed unfavorable."[21]

---

[19] Juan J. Linz, and Alfred C. Stepan, *The Breakdown of Democratic Regime* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978); Scott Mainwaring, and Donald Share, "Transitions through Transaction: Democratization in Brazil and Spain," in Wayne Selcher, ed., *Political Liberation in Brazil* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1986), 172-215; Guillermo O'Donnell, Philippe C. Schmitter, and Lawrence Whitehead, eds., *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Prospects for Democracy* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986); Giuseppe Di Palma, *To Craft Democracies: An Essay on Democratic Transitions* (Berkeley, CA: 1990); Adam Przeworski, *Democracy and the Market: Political and Economic Reforms in Eastern Europe and Latin America* (Cambridge, CT: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

[20] Di Palma, 88-89.

[21] Ibid., 8-9, 22.

Additionally, elite, corporatist, and rational thinking have influenced genetic theoretical approaches. Some game theory has been incorporated in national or comparative analyses of transition as a way of attempting to ascertain specific factors that may support transition more strongly, although this process is not well established in academia. A more important outgrowth of the genetic approach is theoretical research on constitutional design, which is seen as closely connected to elite bargaining.[22]

Other theoretical approaches which incorporate aspects of pactism, political crafting, path-dependent analysis, and contingency have been developed. Path dependency begins by rejecting the notion of common causality in democratic transitions and allows for analysis of choice regarding different avenues to democracy. The comparative literature covers a vast variety of transition typology analyses in a serious attempt to accommodate different national case studies. This literature emphasizes links between the form of transition and the type of democratic regime that results, and how the first may assist in shaping the second. It incorporates a firm repudiation of the idea of democratic prerequisites. Similarly relevant is the concept of contingency, which compels a more synergistic interpretation regarding the process of transitional development. According to Schmitter, this postulates that regime outcomes "… depend less on objective conditions circumscribing routinised actions than on subjective evaluation surrounding unique strategic choices."[23] Moreover, he expands contingent factors to encompass speed, timing, and sequence.

---

[22] Alfred Stepan, "Paths Toward Redemocratization," in Guillermo O'Donnell, Philippe C. Schmitter, and Lawrence Whitehead eds., *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Prospects for Democracy* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986), part 3, chapter 3, 64-84.

[23] Ibid., 84.

Genetic theories have been criticized as too elitist, over-voluntaristic, and disconnecting political action from socio-economic elements. There is a marked inclination to assume too much freedom on the part of transition actors, even given the mutability and ambiguity of the transition process. Genetic thinking is reactive to functional theoretical approaches, and this has limited its evolution and application to a wider theoretical field. A shortcoming to genetic theories may be that they are too narrow in scope. In addition, new theoretical interest in the transitional process has resulted in new interpretations regarding genetic skepticism and thought, although this has not expanded the theory or its application significantly. However, the recent transition processes in Communist Europe, Latin America, and Africa have renewed interest in incorporating broad considerations when analyzing early regime change from authoritarian to democratic.

One must note that these different schools are more complementary than is often indicated. Nevertheless, there are recognizable deficiencies in the current literature on democratization. To summarize:

- They fail to take into account an historical dimension that is not merely passive background;
- They fall short of embracing the democratization process as a whole, from pre-transition liberalization under authoritarian regimes to transition and then through consolidation to regime outcome.
- They break down regarding accommodating different levels of this process while focusing on interactions between them; and
- They do not, by and large, embrace the multiple transformation processes (whether dual or triple); this is perhaps the greatest particular challenge.[24]

There are specific considerations to which democratization analysis must give serious attention. For example, international factors in the democratization process have,

[24] Pridham, *The Dynamic of Democratization*, 13.

as a rule, been under-analyzed, although this shortfall has been ameliorated somewhat with the historic changes in post-Communist Europe. Among the other aspects missing in theory building is a lack of recognition of the relationship between regime, state, and government, as well as the interconnected societal dimension. The latter is a serious omission given the significance of examining both top-down and bottom-up socio-political pressures in authoritarian collapse as well in transitional process.[25]

Institutions

Weak versus Strong

The significance of creating and establishing institutions such as political parties, the armed forces, legislative bodies, the church, the judicial and executive branches, civil service, a security apparatus, and education in regime change has long been identified. Research interest in institutional design in the democratization process originated in genetic approaches relating decision-making to elite bargaining. Cohesion between institutional preparations and the shape of the new democracy is perceived as the first important historical evidence of democratic action on the part of elites as yet untried in the skills of polyarchical politics. Furthermore, agreement on institutional design indicates a socio-political advance in diminishing the political uncertainty that stigmatizes the transitional period, and in commencing to safeguard the move towards democracy from risks of it being stopped or reversed.[26]

---

[25] Laurence Whitehead, "Democratic Regions, Ostracism, and Pariahs," in Laurence Whitehead, ed., *The International Dimensions of Democratization: Europe and the Americas* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 395-412.

[26] Pridham, *The Dynamic of Democratization*, 148-149; Samuel P. Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1968), 9-10.

One of the risks inherent in the transitional period (which includes institution design and building) are that such institutions will be weak rather than strong in their effective democratic functions. Weak institutions are easily manipulated by the electorate, political elites, opposition forces, special interest groups and the like. Strong institutions are able to better resist such manipulation and continue as effective and consistent entities within the democratic structure and regime; this is not to say, however, that they are inflexible or unable to adapt in meeting changing demands of the democracy in transition. What is crucial is that institutions, such as a nation's constitution, provide a foundation not only for the transition process, but for eventual consolidation of full democracy. Without strong institutions, democratic transition may become stopped, reversed or unresolved short of consolidation. [27]

In a democracy, institutions must be considered legitimate in the eyes of political elites, socio-political opposition forces, the citizens and other nation-states in order to become consolidated. This adds to their strength. By contrast, institutions which are weak will lack a certain degree of legitimacy because they are easily manipulated and are unable to adapt in an efficacious and consistent manner to the requirements and demands of a democratic regime, particularly in order to preserve democracy and its principles. Citizens must perceive, in other words, that they have the best possible institutions, regardless of some defects or flaws in them. These institutions then acquire strength through legitimacy.[28]

---

[27] Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies*, 9-10; Leonardo Morlino, *Democracy Between Consolidation and Crisis: Parties, Groups, and Citizens in Southern Europe* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1998), 25-26.

[28] Huntington, *Political Order*, 9-10; Morlino, *Democracy Between Consolidation and Crisis,* 25-26.

Ongoing disagreement over constitutional establishment is a *prima facie* example of a difficult, likely unresolved transition. As Schmitter argues, constitutions have an effect on several, if not all, partial regime traits, influencing matters such as socio-economic rights as well as formally variable political institutions and even, in certain cases, the operation of political parties.[29] Constitution making seems to fit neatly into the concept of structuring "partial regimes" in the democratization process. Nonetheless, the specific question about whether there is a connection between constitution design and consolidation has been seriously disputed by some transitologists. Di Palma, for example, presents the argument that democratic consolidation and the political structure of its institutions (i.e., its institutionalization) are logically different. His argument, however, is based on a minimalist notion of consolidation of the democratic process. Institutional design could have longer-term effects and consequences than any other aspect of democratic regime consolidation and socio-political stability in the regime transitional process. There is, nonetheless, a relative lack of work on institution building within the context of the complex democratization period from early transition through consolidation.[30]

Institutionalization is a process that takes time and goes on during and beyond both the transition and consolidation processes. Both institutionalization and consolidation create a strong relationship in support of democratic values. In addition, political communities in a democracy depend upon the political strength of the socio-

---

[29] Philippe C. Schmitter, "The consolidation of political democracies: processes, rhythms, sequences and types," in Geoffrey Pridham (ed.), *Transitions to Democracy: Comparative Perspectives from Southern Europe, Latin America and Eastern Europe* (Dartmouth, UK: Aldershot, 1995), 554-558.

[30] Di Palma, 90-92.

political organizations. Thus, in recent years there has been greater scholarly attention to the formal dimension of regime change, encouraged by various arguments in newer institutionalism literature that political democracy depends on the design of political institutions and, contemporaneously, economic and social conditions. This stresses how socio-political institutions affect the strategic behavior of various socio-political actors. Therefore, there is a juncture of interest here in the effects that institutional choice could have on the protection of democratic consolidation.[31]

The nexus created between political institutions and regime change offers one way forward. However, this needs to be broadened in scope, for it has too narrowly emphasized the relative merits of parliamentary or presidential systems of government and their respective chances to stabilize fledgling democratic regimes. In addition, it is imperative to examine how institutional selection itself is dependent on, or determined by, historical legacies and certain patterns; and how much it derives from the socio-political dynamics of the transition per se. Of course, in doing so, one must recognize that there are certain constraints on socio-political opportunities for institutional design as well. From the point that institutional design decisions are put in place, newly born democracies become gradually entrenched in their institutional contours; this points towards their democratic consolidation.[32]

The aforementioned dynamic approach regarding institution building as part of democratization is referred to as backwards and forwards institutionalization. Such

---

[31] Schmitter, "The consolidation of political democracies," 554.

[32] Giuseppe Di Palma, "Parliaments, Consolidation, Institutionalization: A Minimalist View," in Ulrike Liebert, and Maurizio Cotta, eds., *Parliament and Democratic Consolidation in Southern Europe: Greece, Italy, Portugal, Spain, and Turkey* (New York: Pinter Publishers, 1990), 38.

institutionalization focuses on the process of establishing political institutions subsequent to the choice of a particular form of liberal democracy (i.e., parliamentary, presidential or mixed government; centralized, devolved, or federal political structure), but also examines certain decisions on constitutional limitations, such as judicial review and other aspects of allocating socio-political power. Arend Lijphart called this "political and constitutional engineering," applying it to how new democratic nation-states are tangled in their institutional schemes. There are, he asserts, crucial consequences in institutional design regarding creating and establishing the rule of law, along with legitimating the infant regime and thereby its prospects for democratic consolidation.[33]

Huntington defines institutionalization as "…the process by which organizations and procedures acquire value and stability." It follows, therefore, that institutionalization is more than just creating constitutions because it incorporates both institutional design and institution building. Obviously, constitutions lay the groundwork for procedural democratic systems; however, they usually have propositions for substantive democracy as well.[34]

The theoretical concept of backwards and forwards institutionalization borrows some inspiration from Otto Kirchheimer's notion of "confining conditions," whereby a perimeter is placed around institutional choice. At the same time, socio-political dynamics of regime change may alter or enlarge that perimeter, thereby opening the route to new variants. It is acknowledged that the socio-political constraints from the past are

---

[33] Arend Lijphart, "The Southern European Examples of Democratization: Six Lessons for Latin America," *Government and Opposition* 27, (Winter 1990): 72.

[34] Samuel P. Huntington, "Political Development and Political Decay," *World Politics* 18, (April 1965), 394.

probably less firm but may still persist in the institutional socio-political arena versus the socio-economic one outlined by Kirchheimer. However, this point begs clarification with regard to the connection between regime and state, and the system (i.e., governance and government) since this is dependent on the extent of political change involved. While transitional process is essentially about regime change, it can also have significant effects on the state and the government. It generates consequences for governance as well as affecting the broader meaning of institutionalization itself.[35]

Some confusion could plausibly appear between the government and related institutions since these political entities tend to fuse to a greater or lesser degree under nondemocratic regimes. This is particularly true in totalitarian regimes where there is an intimate relationship between party, government, and state. This is usually less of a concern in standard authoritarian regimes since such regimes are less likely to be based only on a purely one-party political structure. Still, regimes and government often become virtually inseparable. Thus, there is a strong case for categorizing nondemocratic regimes as systems instead of regimes because of this important interrelationship. By contrast, in liberal democratic nation-states the regime becomes more distinguishable from the state; successive governments form the regime. In the same way, political society becomes delimited and delineated under democracy but under authoritarian or totalitarian rule is fused together with the regime.[36]

It follows that regime change can have crucial effects on the role of the state. Even though, according to Fishman, political regimes are less permanent than states, "A

---

[35] Otto Kirchheimer, *Social Democracy and the Rule of Law* (Boston: Allen & Unwin, 1987).

[36] Robert Fishman, "Rethinking State and Regime: Southern Europe's Transition to Democracy," *World Politics* 42, no. 3 (1990): 428.

state may remain in place even when regimes come and go."[37] In addition, the individuals and collectivities that occupy the main roles in nation-states are not same over time as those who do so in regimes. In the former, these encompass the judiciary, military, the bureaucracy, and the security apparatus. Stephanie Lawson has distinguished between the state and the regime by creating a line between the location and the exercise of political power. A regime is specifically that part of the socio-political system that influences how and under what particular conditions and limitations the power of the state is executed; in other words, a political regime is preoccupied with the form of rule.[38]

Even so, there is another aspect to this specific problem with authoritarian legacies. Although the state is less determined by contingency than is a regime, the blurring of the distinction under authoritarian rule invariably affects popular beliefs. Thus, public mistrust towards the state is likely to persist, as a legacy of prior conditions, for a time after democracy has been established, especially during the transition period. This was clear in Latin America, Eastern Europe, and Africa. This public behavior is due in part to the discredit into which authoritarian rule has fallen; more specifically, this public attitude is related to socio-political abuses that authoritarian regimes carried out upon their people. Such resentment and distrust could persist for some time even though democratic regimes behave differently than authoritarian ones regarding the political and civil rights of their people. A distinction between state and regime, as well between a regime and individual governments, is necessary for democratic consolidation. The diffusion of political authority in the state structure is likely to assist this political change;

---

[37] Fishman, 428.

[38] Stephanie Lawson, "Conceptual Issues in the Comparative Study of Regime Change and Democratization," *Comparative Politics* 26, (January 1993): 187.

democratic reforms in the state organization or bureaucracy can aid the state in adjusting to its changing society. Therefore, a distinction between a democratic regime and democratic state exists in democratic consolidation.[39]

Thus, analyzing regime changes and the relationships such changes have with the state creates the underlying theoretical context for the beginning of the democratization process and its scope for institutional design. It permits more effective research into the theoretical concepts associated with backwards and forwards institutionalization.

Domestic Politics and Political Parties

In the process of democratization, political elites and parties perform important roles in institutional design. Political party leaders formulate the rules and structures of liberal democracy via constituent assemblies and activism, while those in office take a crucial part in shaping government and in determining the course of certain policies and performance. These policies and their implementation unquestionably have a formative impact on public attitudes and thus affect the prospects of democratic consolidation. It is political parties or their inchoate equivalents that engage in the historically important establishment of free elections following the collapse of authoritarian rule. In a democracy a party system appears to guarantee political pluralism. In short, political parties execute both the top-down functions of control and direction and incorporate

[39] David Collier and Steven Levitsky, "Democracy without Adjectives: Conceptual Innovation in Comparative Research," *World Politics* 49, no. 3 (1997), 446-448.

bottom-up pressures and demands. They are vital to comprehending the elite-mass relationship throughout the democratization process and post-democratization process.[40]

There must be an ongoing nexus between the consolidation of a new party system and the overall democratic consolidation process in an interaction that may be either mutually reinforcing or diametrically oppositional. One measure of this is whether a positive dynamic evolves between party-political motivation and interests that may be termed systemic or national. A caveat applies here, however: this cannot be too absolute a connection. For example, well-organized and developed party organizations and a stabilized party system are not, *ceteris paribus*, an unqualified prerequisite for successful political regime consolidation yet will undoubtedly influence the type of democracy that takes shape. High instability in a new party system is, perhaps counter-intuitively, essential in the first years before patterns of support begin to develop because it helps establish responsiveness to the constituency and ensures acquisition of necessary adaptive skills by the new parties. Nonetheless, its persistence or reappearance beyond that early phase could lead to socio-political difficulties in regime change.[41]

An additional concern regarding partisanship is that resulting ideological polarization could place consolidation at risk. Ideological polarization, in Morlino's words, is a "double-edged sword" with respect to consolidation. On one hand, this could, through feelings of political solidarity, encourage the organizational development and identification of the individual party and thus stabilization. On the other, party political tensions can intensify and even radicalize political conflict within newborn democracies,

---

[40]Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies*, 344-345.

[41] Leonardo Morlino, "Party Elites and Democratic Consolidation in Southern Europe," in Eva Etzioni-Halevy, ed., *Classes and Elites in Democracy and Democratization* (New York: Garland, 1997), 206.

thereby plausibly causing systemic strains. A good example of the latter was tense relations between two Italian parties: the conservative Centro Cristiano Democratico (CCD, the Christian Democratic Centrists) and the leftist Partito Socialista Democratico Italiano (PSDI, the Italian Socialist Democratic Party) following the World War II. The problem resulted from balancing the dictates of the transition process, requiring some protection for the still fragile young democracy, against the need for encouraging political pluralism so that political competition finds a way to flourish. While the outcome conceivably could have been influenced by the decisions and behavior of politicians, it was not entirely in their hands, as events, issues and unforeseen political developments incorporating mass-level pressures illustrate. These mass pressures came from labor organizations, youth groups, and women's associations along with party constituencies from various socio-economic strata.[42]

In the end, the very role that political parties played evolved and grew during the different stages of democratization. In the transitional and consolidation period, political parties are very important in that they regulate behavior and hiring of the civil service and educate the public on certain political matters. Additionally, grass roots organizations press parties to adopt or alter policies; they, too, undertake educative endeavors. Political parties play a crucial role in regard to inter-elite and grass roots relations and behavior; parties strive to form a bridge between elites and those of other socio-economic statuses by incorporating masses (or at least those who share similar political viewpoints and

---

[42] Leonard Morlino, "Political Parties and Democratic Consolidation in Southern Europe," in Richard Richard Gunther, P. Nikiforos Diamandouros, and Hans-Jürgen Puhle, eds., *The Politics of Democratic Consolidation: Southern Europe in Comparative Perspective* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), 348-359.

concerns) and their political preferences and demands. At the end of the 1970s, Greece, Portugal, and Spain experienced this kind of party politics development.[43]

Charismatic political party leadership may work for the benefit or to the detriment of democratic transition and consolidation. In Greece, the leader of the Conservatives, Constantine Karamanlis, and the Socialist leader, Andreas Papandreou, played a vital role in shaping and formulating party politics in 1974. Both used their personal charisma to consolidate their power in the Greek socio-political structure, resulting in even stronger identification amongst the electorate with one party or the other. Severe polarization and the inability to arrive at efficacious solutions to national issues impacted democratic political functions in Greece because of this.[44]

Another aspect of political parties relates to the control of the military. The question of the relation between political parties and the military is the most controversial in inter-elite relations. The establishment of civilian control over the armed forces should be incontestable, and even strategic decisions associated with the military and its command leadership should come from civilian authority. In other words, civilian authority decides the rules and regulations and can change them at any moment, subject to constitutional constraints. Civilian control is firmly secured when the military are no longer in a position to take political initiatives. Such unqualified acceptance of civilian control by the armed forces is usually achieved when political parties move to civilianize and professionalize the military. These processes introduce a political tolerance of the military and within it; the officer corps is not resistant to the values of democratic society.

---

[43] Morlino, "Political Parties and Democratic Consolidation in Southern Europe," 348-359.

[44] Morlino, *Democracy Between Consolidation and Crisis*, 198-199.

A democratic society tries to eliminate the military practice of what Huntington describes as praetorianism. Historically, the Praetorian Guard protected the Roman emperor. In the modern military application of praetorianism, the armed forces adopt this historic role in undertaking the protection and security of the state to ensure its existence even if it means they themselves must take control of the nation-state and its governance. It is difficult for a nascent democracy to attempt to change the praetorian nature of the armed forces in such cases because the military believes that part of their mission and responsibility is to defend "*la patria*" (loosely translated as the fatherland/nation/country) against internal and external enemies. Latin America offers some of the strongest examples of praetorian governments and the complexity of motivations surrounding them. Another example is that in the late 1970s, the new democracies of Greece, Portugal, and Spain attempted to eliminate praetorian elements and ideologies in their armed forces.[45]

Among social actors, churches have been the most dominant in transition periods although their role, particularly that of the Catholic Church, varied according to the position of the Vatican. This was evident in post-war Italy when Pope Pius XII permitted virtually limitless political entanglement by the Roman Catholic Church because of his intransigence regarding the specter of communism. He declared that destroying communism was a matter of religious duty for conservatives. Similarly, religion played a very important role in the consolidation of party politics in three countries of southern Europe: Greece, Portugal, and Spain. The Greek Orthodox Church tried to create a close relationship with the conservative political parties in Greece, and the Catholic Church attempted the same in Portugal and Spain. Local religious leaders believed that strong

[45]Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies*, 192-193.

faith-based politics would protect the fledgling democracies from communism and other dangers.[46]

In 1974 Greece faced a transitional and consolidation period. Constantine Karamanlis and his conservative party, New Democracy, tried to reform Greek politics and place the conservative party in the center of both socio-political and socio-economic arenas. Karamanlis set out to build the Third Greek Republic, supported by the Greek Orthodox Church and other actors.[47]

On the Horns of a Dilemma: Transition and Consolidation in Fragile Democracies

New democracies face a difficult task in establishing strong socio-political institutions. Well-developed democratic organizations, skilled civil servants to staff them, and habits of democratic action are not achievable overnight by parliamentarians, journalists, judicial officials, and party politicians. Nor is trust in the objectivity and capability of such valuable institutions easily attained. As rational-choice analysts of the establishment of institutional structures have continually indicated, transaction costs and dilemmas of collective political action curtail the emergence of institutions to facilitate socio-political bargaining that would make everyone better off.[48]

---

[46] Richard Gunther, and José R. Montero, "The Anchors of Partisanship: A Comparative Analysis of Voting Behavior in Four Southern European Democracies," in P. Nikiforos Diamandouros, and Richard Gunther, eds., *Parties, Politics, and Democracy in the New Southern Europe* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001), 139.

[47] Takis S. Pappas, "Nea Demokratia: Party Development and Organizational Logics," in Piero Ignazi, and Colette Ysmal, *The Organization of Political Parties in Southern Europe*, eds., (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1998), 222.

[48] Edward D. Mansfield and Jack Snyder, "Democratization and the Danger of War," *International Security* 20, no.1 (1995), 24.

Political leadership may have goals which conflict or deter democratic consolidation: first, their most fundamental goal is to remain in power. Contrasted with this goal is political opposition mobilizing resistance to and dissent regarding the current leadership. To further create tensions in a democratic polity, grass roots forces are able to mobilize and encourage challengers to the political incumbents; there is a direct link between institutions and opposition, in other words. Therefore, political leaders perceive that if they have setbacks, especially in foreign policies or military conflicts, they will be a weaker political position. This directly clashes with their first goal: to remain in power. A good example of this was when Karamanlis was faced with the Cyprus crisis in 1974: the opposition accused the conservatives too weak to effectively respond to and resolve the crisis. Karamanlis then adopted a more aggressive foreign posture.[49]

The evolution and development of efficient democratic socio-political institutions pose a further dilemma: not everyone is made better off by capable democratic reforms. Certain grass-roots groups, including powerful ones, are more likely to be the losers from the strengthening of democratic institutions. These include the former autocratic rulers themselves, various civil servants of the old regime who fear their roles may lose their significance and power in a transformed polity, and economic and political elites whose privileges could diminish in a more pluralistic society. Democratic transition and consolidation can be significantly impeded by those who perceive themselves as damaged or short-changed in some way by the changes accompanying these processes.[50]

---

[49] David L. Rousseau, *Democracy and War: Institutions, Norms, and the Evolution of International Conflict* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2005), 21-22.

[50] Jack Knight, *Institutions and Social Conflict* (Cambridge, Great Britain: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, various kings, landowners, nobles, and industrialists hindered democratization. The incentives for these socio-political and economic elites to interfere with democratic change depended in large part on the mobility of their assets. British landowners were comparatively flexible in opening up the British democratic system in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries because they perceived that they would benefit more under the newly developing socio-political and economic system. In Wilhelmian Germany, the *Junker* (landowning elite) curtailed democratization because they had very few economic incentives. In Russia today, some former Communist party leaders have shown great adaptability to a privatized economy once they perceived potential personal gains.[51]

The founding of a strong secular Turkish Republic in 1923 was a radical break with the Ottoman past. Yet, in terms of the system of power and its socio-political relations between center and periphery, the new political system showed remarkable continuity with the past. It has been correctly argued that the revolution of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk in Turkey was mainly a revolution of values, a social and cultural upheaval that dramatically altered the legitimating socio-political symbols supportive of political authority. A secular, nationalist state obviously required an act of rupture from an imperial-patrimonial monarchy that rested on religious legitimacy. This aspect cannot be underestimated in its significance. However, in the new political system, the Turkish armed forces (the *askeri*) would play an important role in shaping domestic and foreign decision-making. Kemal's constitution elevated the military to guardians of Turkish democracy, national identity and of the new secularism. Thus, at various times, such as

[51] Barrington Moore, Jr., *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy* (Boston, MA: Beacon, 1996).

during the invasion of Cyprus in 1974, the Turkish government, under the auspices of its military leadership, was forced to be aggressive in certain crises, even against other democracies.[52]

When autocratic nation-states begin to democratize, many of the national interests threatened by democratization may well be military in nature. As Charles Tilly argues, "War made the state and the state made war." In early modern Europe the armed forces occupied privileged positions in the state structure, which was built to serve political needs. Furthermore, ruling aristocracies were interspersed in the military so democratization inherently challenged the socio-political order and establishment. It confronted bureaucratic political and economic interests of an old elite that was, at its very core, a military elite. Schumpeter designed an entire theory of imperialism based on the atavistic interests of the military-feudal aristocracy. Evidence indicates European middle-class reformers sometimes wanted to revitalize the state's military power. This was a rallying incentive of English radicals in the Crimean War (1853-1856) and of German middle class officers before 1914. Nonetheless, they wanted to replace aristocratic thinking with middle-class rationalizations. Thus, democratization led by supporters of military power was nearly as much of a threat to the old armed forces as the democratization effort led by the famous pacifist Richard Codden.[53]

Therefore, during transitional periods of democratization, it is possible to engage in conflictual relations because new democracies usually exhibit weak socio-political

---

[52] Ilkay Sunar, and Sabri Sayri, "Democracy in Turkey: Problems and Prospects," in Guillermo O'Donnell, Philippe C. Schmitter, and Lawrence Whitehead, eds., *Transitions form Authoritarian Rule: Prospects for Democracy* (Baltimore, MA: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986), part 1, chapter 7, 168-169.

[53] Charles Tilly, "Reflections on the History of European State-Making," in Charles Tilly, ed., *The Formation of National States in Europe* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1975), 42.

institutions. Moreover, the old socio-political elites could hinder the democratization process and press a nascent democracy to act aggressively during times of crisis, especially if they are embedded in the military institutions or in other politically powerful positions. In addition, various interest groups might influence the newly democratic government to adopt an aggressive stance in order to protect various national interests; with democratic civil liberties and the rule of law, they are able to speak more freely—and they may well feel there is now something worth defending by any means, including aggression. The radical Russian ethno-nationalist Vladimir Zhirinovsky fits the latter profile.[54]

It is in this transitional period, during which policies, procedures, institutions, and parties are becoming established and formalized and a democracy is defining itself, that an embryonic democracy faces the greatest risks. It may be required to take on dilemmas such as potential war, domestic unrest, economic development, determination of a particular foreign policy or strategic posture, or protection of national interests or its own existence in the face of real or perceived threats. Of particular importance (and largely unaddressed in the present literature) is the manner in which an emerging democracy facing internal and external challenges responds when it perceives that another democracy conflicts with it, threatens its existence or national interests, or places its concept of nationhood or citizenship at risk.

[54] Mansfield and Snyder, 6.

Conclusion

In light of this argument, it would be hard to sustain a naïve enthusiasm for spreading peace by supporting and promoting democratization. Pushing nuclear-armed powers like China and Russia toward a democratization movement is like playing roulette, where the odds are against a positive result for the player. The roulette wheel is already spinning backwards for Russia.

One major finding of the theoretical scholarship on democratization in Latin and Central America is that the process went most smoothly when socio-political elites, menaced by the transitional period, and more specifically members of the military, are given a "golden parachute."[55] Above all, they need a strong guarantee that if they relinquish power, they will not wind up imprisoned. The history of the democratizing Great Powers broadens this insight. The democratization process was least likely to force imprudent aggressive behavior in cases where old socio-political elites could visualize and actualize a reasonably bright future for themselves in the new social, political, and economic order. British aristocrats, for instance, had more of their wealth invested in commercial and industrial ventures than they did in agriculture, so they had strong socio-economic interests tied to the rising middle class. They could deal with democratization with relative equanimity. In contrast, Prussia's capital-starved, small-scale *Junker* socio-political class had no choice but to rely on agricultural protectionism, and/or military careers.

In today's global context, finding benign, productive employment for the erstwhile Communist *nomenklatura*, nuclear scientists, military officers, and smoke stack

[55] Doh Chull Shin, "On the Third Wave of Democratization: A Synthesis and Evaluation of Recent Theory and Research," *World Politics* 49, no. 1 (1994), 161-163.

industrialists ought to rank high on the list of political priorities. Policies targeted at giving them a stake in the economic privatization process, along with subsidizing the conversion of their knowledge and skills to new, more peace-oriented tasks in a market-based economy seem a good step at the right direction.

According to some historical interpretations, Russian Defense Minister Pavel Grachev was eager to utilize force to solve the Chechen confrontation. This was in order to illustrate that Russian military might was still useful, and that increased investment in the Russian armed forces would pay big dividends.[56] Instead of pursuing such a high-risk and dangerous path, the Russian military elite needs to be convinced that its highly-valued prestige, housing, pensions, and various technical competencies will continue if and only if it transforms itself into a western-style modern military, subordinate to civilian authority and utilizing force only in accordance with prevailing international norms and regulations. In addition, though old elites need to be kept happy, they also need to be kept weak and under control. Pacts should not prop up the remnants of the authoritarian system, but rather niches should be developed as needed for elite members of the former regime in the new socio-political system.

Finally, the kind of ruling coalition that appears in the process of democratization strongly depends on the various incentives created by the international system. Both Germany and Japan started on the path toward liberal and stable democratization processes in the mid-1920s, encouraged in great part by a plethora of opportunities for trade and investment from the advanced industrialized democracies (such as the U.S. and Great Britain), and by credible security treaties which defused scare-mongering ethno-

[56] Mansfield and Snyder, 27.

nationalistic movements. Nonetheless, when international support evaporated, Germany and Japan's liberal coalitions collapsed.

Consider the case of China in contemporary times, whose democratization may happen in the context of deepening and broadening Chinese economic ties with the West. The stability of the Western commercial nexus could contribute to a democratic environment in and regarding China. Only time will illustrate the results of the certain aspects of the processes associated with democratization transitions and consolidations around the globe.

About the Author

Vassilios Damiras is RIEAS Regional Director in the USA. He is also the East Coast Director of Talon Strategic Consulting. He analyzes various issues of counterterrorism and homeland security. His research focuses on Al Qaeda and Iran as well as his task is to find new ways to fight terrorism.

RIEAS Publications