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# The Tunisian Revolution , the Union For The Mediterranean and the European Union

# The Beginning of a New Wave of Democratization In The Arab World?

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**The Tunisian Revolution and the Union for the Mediterranean**.

The recent overthrow of Tunisian dictator Ben Ali by the population can be regarded as an important step towards democratization of the Arab world. The Tunisian revolution had its repercussions in Egypt, Algeria and Libya. Is the Tunisian revolution the start of a domino effect across the Mediterranean? Which role can the Union for the Mediterranean play to support this revolutionary process towards, hopefully, democratization. Will the Tunisian Revolution a lost opportunity due to the slow reaction of the Union for the Mediterranean and the EU?

The paper will analyse the process leading up to the Tunisian revolution as an example about problems of democratic governance in the Maghreb and Mashreq. Moreover, the role of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership and the Union for the Mediterranean in sustaining neo-patrimonial dictatorships.

The paper tries to assess what has been so far the legacy of the EU in general, the Euro-Mediterranean partnership in concrete, on supporting democratization efforts in the Maghreb and Mashreq countries. More importantly, can the EU help transform the Tunisian revolution into a cycle of democracy-building in the region. Is the Union of the Mediterranean the right addressee for supporting such efforts?

## Introduction: The Silence of the Arab World during the Third Wave of Democratization

Throughout the past forty years the Arab world has been absent and silent in relation to the democratization that went around the world. Still today, the costs of human life to achieve freedom and democracy have been high and with mixed results. Samuel Huntington´s Third Wave of Democratization clearly showed that in some cases democratization in one country had a domino effect on other countries of the region.(Huntington,1991). In this sense, the present Arab Spring resembles very much similar democratization movements in Southern, Central and Eastern Europe, the former Soviet Union, Latin America, Africa and Asia. In the past forty years just one region remained more or less aloof from these democratization processes: the Arab world in the Maghreb, Mashreq and Gulf States.

Dictators and their neo-patrimonial family structures dominate and dominated most of these countries. This can be said also for Libya which clearly was dominated by the Ghaddafi clan, as it becomes more clear everyday the old regime is crumbling. The cleptocratic tendencies of regimes across the regime cannot be emphasised enough. The former dictator Ben Ali had accumulated an estimated fortune of € 5 billion invested in real estate, airlines and other areas, particularly in France and Switzerland. This clearly shows the strong connection of the dictator to France and the French elite. Hosni Mubarak personal wealth was estimated as being 51 billion Euros, ten times that of dictator Ben Ali, mostly invested in the United States which was and is a close ally of Egypt do to its strategic position in the Middle East. According to French experts this estimate of Mubarak´s fortune is inflated by at least two "0". In any case, both dictators were the centre of very corrupt regimes. The vote buying schemes of elections in Egypt are a good example of this corruption. The breakdown of the regimes was also the breakdown of a culture of systemic corruption which pervaded all sectors of society.(France 24, 8 February 2011). Such breakdown does not mean, that systemic corruption may not prevail in a new more democratic disguise. Meanwhile, it became clear that also Muammar Ghaddafi used his power in Libya to enrich himself and his family. It is estimated that his fortune amounted to € 70 billion Euros with investments in all possible businesses in Italy, the UK, Brazil and other countries. About € 20 billion were invested in the United Kingdom. Most of the money proceeded from the revenues of the oil business.(O Pais online,24 February 2011; The Telegraph,24 February 2011).

One of the factors for the long survival of these dictatorships were the support of democratic countries due to its former colonial ties. There was a strong connection between the Tunisian

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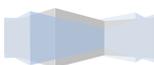
and French elite, strong ties between Egypt and the United States and last but least, the corruption of key European states like the UK, Germany and Italy through Ghaddafi´s oil and other contracts. Moreover, for the European Union both Ben Ali´s and Ghaddafi´s regimes were crucial to impede potential immigrants from Africa to cross the Mediterranean to Europe. In this sense, the European Union itself was interested in stability in the region. The Barcelona process which started in 1995 and led to the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership became more an instrument for stabilization of the region, than regime change. The overall project was doomed to fail, because the addressees were dictatorships which nurtured non-democratic governance structures. Accountability and transparency cultures were and are still worlds apart.(Joffé,2011:234-235; 237-238)

In spite of diversity within the European Union in relation to corruption perception, there is an even larger gap of accountability and transparency to the Mediterranean countries, with the big exception of Israel. This is reinforced by the fact that non-democratic structures dominate the whole way politics is done in the southern Mediterranean. Some features that existed before the Arab Spring will probably persist for a long time.

Firstly, as already mentioned the Mediterranean countries were and still are neo-patrimonial authoritarian dictatorship with elements of façade democracy in order to appease western powers. Neo-patrimonialism is a phase in the development of the country between old archaic forms of government towards democratic governance.

Neo-patrimonial structures can have a more authoritarian outlook or even a more democratic one. Nevertheless, the superficial appearance of democracy may be blocked and affected by conservative archaic forces that want to preserve the "old" structures and prevent a development towards more democratic accountable "new" structures.
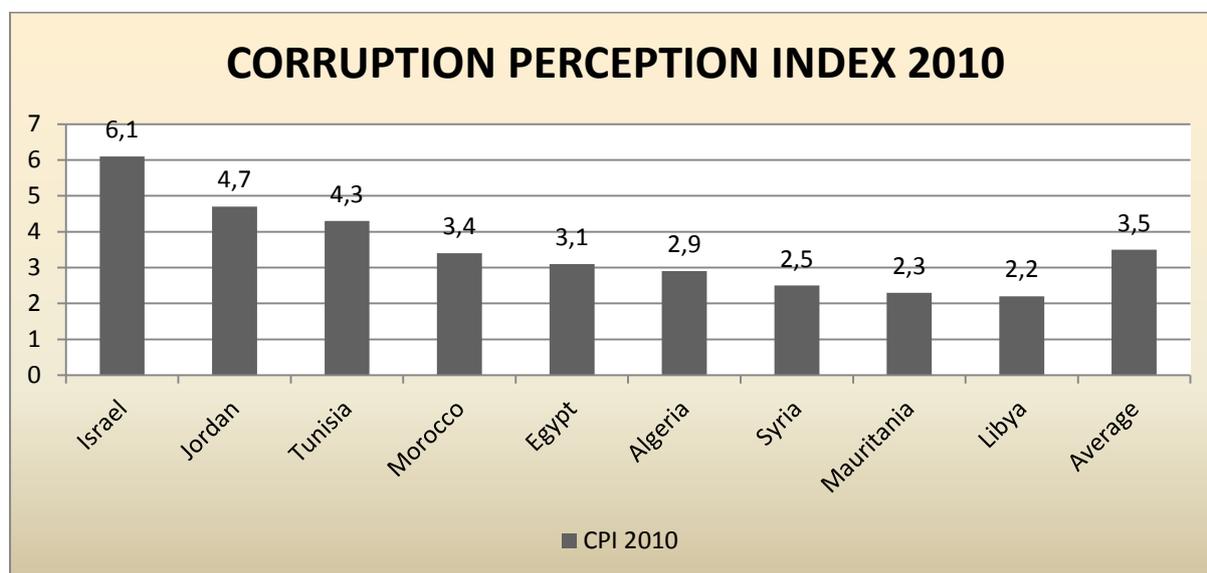
**FIGURE 1.CORRUPTION PERCEPTION INDEX 2010 FOR EUROPEAN UNION COUNTRIES**
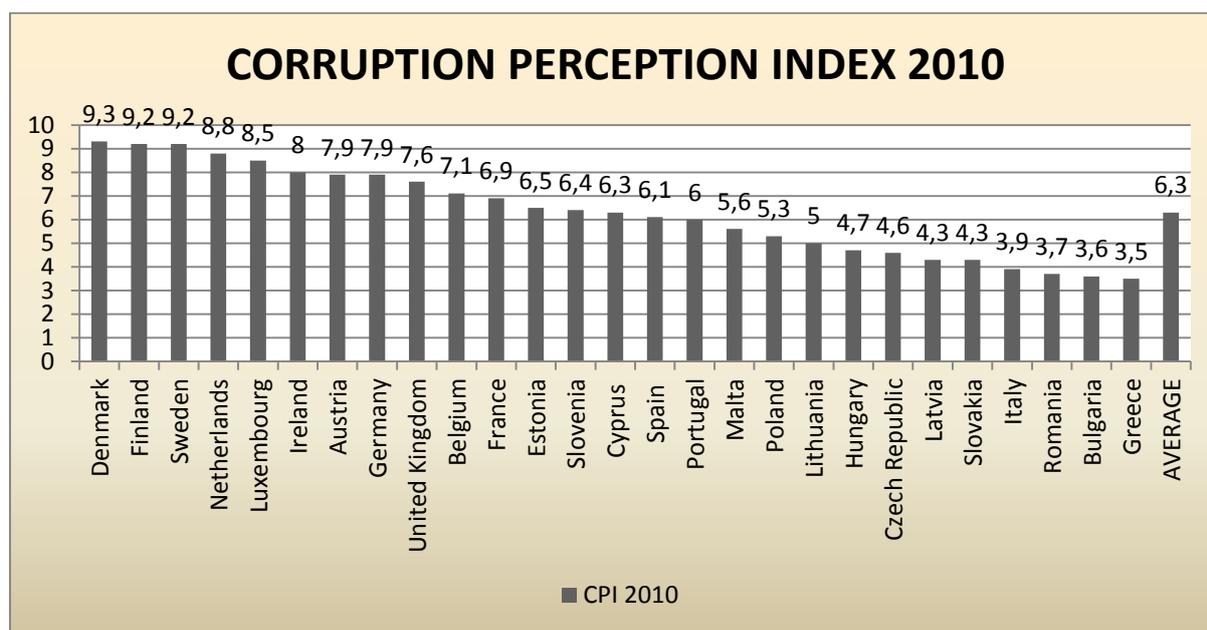


CORRUPTION PERCEPTION INDEX 2010

**Source:**Transparency International, Corruption Perception Index 2010, posted on website at http://www.transparency.org/policy_research/surveys_indices/cpi/2010/results accessed on 26 August 2011

**Figure 2.CORRUPTION PERCEPTION INDEX 2010 FOR SOUTHERN MEDITERRANEAN COUNTRIES**



CORRUPTION PERCEPTION INDEX 2010

**Source:**Transparency International, Corruption Perception Index 2010, posted on website at http://www.transparency.org/policy_research/surveys_indices/cpi/2010/results accessed on 26 August 2011

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All European countries had to undergo neo-patrimonial developments in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, some of them, particularly in southern, central and eastern Europe are still in engaged in overcoming them today.  The southern Mediterranean countries are the best example where the "old" archaic patrimonial forces are still stronger than "new" democratic modernizing ones.   The powerful "glocalization" process is changing the gatekeeper function of states. Through satellite television, internet social platforms and global mobility(tourism, business  and academic exchange) the global has become local, and the local has become global.   Dictatorships are becoming vulnerable to global and domestic public opinion.   People know that they can do better, than they are doing. Therefore, they are willing to sacrifice their lives in order to improve the quality of life for themselves and others.   Gero Erdman and Ulf Engel(2006)  made an important attempt to review thoroughly this highly controversial concept. They  define it as follows:

> Neopatrimonialism is a mixture of two, partly interwoven, types of
> domination that co-exist: namely, patrimonial and legal-rational bureaucratic domination.
> Under patrimonialism, all power relations between ruler and ruled, political as well as administrative relations, are personal relations; there is no differentiation between the private and the public realm. However, under neopatrimonialism the distinction between the private and the public, at least formally, exists and is accepted, and public reference can be made to this distinction (it is a different matter whether this is observed or not). Neopatrimonial rule takes place within the framework of, and with the claim to, legal-rational bureaucracy or "modern" stateness. Formal structures and rules do exist, although in practice, the separation of the private and public sphere is not always observed.
> In other words, two systems exist next to each other, the patrimonial of the personal relations, and the legal rational of the bureaucracy. Naturally these spheres are not isolated from each other; quite to the contrary, they permeate each other; or more precisely, the patrimonial penetrates the legal-rational system and twists its logic, functions, and effects.(Erdman,Engel,2006:18)

It means that any democratization process that may start now will take a long time to transform the political culture and structure of the countries concerned.  In the next years, there will be a continuation between "old" and "new" forces with the worst case scenario of the return to the old regime.

Secondly, most of these countries are still illiberal democracies, meaning that both liberal democracy and a free market economy were and probably are still oppressed. The issue of rule of law is one the most important aspects of a liberal democracy. None of the southern Mediterranean countries, apart from Israel, has a strong judiciary sector which is independent from the authoritarian political structures. On the contrary, control of the repressive apparatus and the judiciary  are important pre-conditions for the survival of these regimes.  Particularly, Fareed Zakariah in his book "The Future of Freedom" has shown the problem of illiberalism in Islamic countries. He proposed a top-down  evolutionary reform of the political systems to
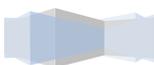
be achieved through continuous pressure of the international community. However, the recent Arab Spring has certainly surpassed all his expectations. More important than the social media, was the courage of the people to occupy the streets peacefully and confront the structural violence of the respective regimes(Zakaria,2003:  119-159  ).

Thirdly, this is interrelated to the economic prospects of these countries. In terms of the global competitiveness index of the world economic forum, there is again a major gap between the European Union and the southern Mediterranean. The index consists of 12 indicators based on basic requirements, efficiency driven  and innovation driven ones.   One major issue is the late formation of a national market and the establishment of a market culture.  The world competitiveness index tried to map where each economy is located in a three stages of global competitiveness development: basic requirements, efficiency driven and last but not least innovation driven. Table 2 shows that there is a considerable disjointed development between north and south.  The legal aspects of a market are probably the most important aspect to ensure that rights of buyers and sellers are protected. In a neo-patrimonial ruled system aspects related to clientelism, patronage and corruption may play a role in making markets less efficient. Major reforms are being undertaken in Morocco and Jordan, but the "old" politics and economic ways are still major impediments to more substantial progress.

**TABLE 1.GLOBAL COMPETITIVENESS INDEX VALUE FOR EUROPEAN UNION AND SOUTHERN MEDITERRANEAN COUNTRIES(2011)**

| EUROPEAN UNION | | | SOUTHERN MEDITERRANEAN | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| COUNTRIES | PLACE | SCORE | COUNTRIES | PLACE | SCORE |
| Sweden | 2 | 5.56 | Israel | 24 | 4.91 |
| Germany | 5 | 5.39 | Tunisia | 32 | 4.65 |
| Finland | 7 | 5.37 | Jordan | 65 | 4.21 |
| Netherlands | 8 | 5.33 | Morocco | 75 | 3.08 |
| Denmark | 9 | 5.32 | Egypt | 81 | 4.00 |
| United Kingdom | 12 | 5.25 | Algeria | 86 | 3.96 |
| France | 15 | 5.13 | Syria | 97 | 3.78 |
| Austria | 18 | 5.09 | Libya | 100 | 3.74 |
| Belgium | 19 | 5.07 | Mauritania | 135 | 3.14 |
| Luxembourg | 20 | 5.05 | | | |
| Ireland | 29 | 4.79 | | | |
| Estonia | 33 | 4.61 | | | |
| Czech Republic | 36 | 4.57 | | | |
| Poland | 39 | 4.51 | | | |
| Cyprus | 40 | 4.50 | | | |
| Spain | 42 | 4.49 | | | |
| Slovenia | 45 | 4.42 | | | |
| Portugal | 46 | 4.38 | | | |
| Lithuania | 47 | 4.38 | | | |
| Malta | 50 | 4.37 | | | |
| Italy | 48 | 4.37 | | | |
| Hungary | 52 | 4.33 | | | |
| Romania | 67 | 4.16 | | | |
| Slovak Republic | 60 | 4.25 | | | |
| Latvia | 70 | 4.14 | | | |
| Bulgaria | 71 | 4.13 | | | |
| Greece | 83 | 3.99 | | | |

Source:World Economic Forum,2011:16-17

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**TABLE 2.GLOBAL COMPETITIVENESS DEVELOPMENT PHASES FROM BASIC TO INNOVATORY OF EUROPEAN UNION MEMBER-STATES AND THE SOUTHERN MEDITERRANEAN COUNTRIES(2011)**

| REGION | STAGE ONE: BASIC REQUIREMENTS | TRANSITION FROM STAGE ONE TO TWO | STAGE TWO: EFFICIENCY | TRANSITION FROM STAGE TWO TO THREE | STAGE THREE: INNOVATION |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| EUROPEAN UNION | | | Bulgaria Romania | Estonia Hungary Latvia Lithuania Poland Slovak Republic | Austria Belgium Cyprus Czech Republic Denmark Finland Germany France Greece Ireland Italy Luxembourg Malta Netherlands Portugal Slovenia Spain Sweden United Kingdom |
| SOUTHERN MEDITERRANEAN | | Algeria Egypt Morocco Libya Syria | Jordan Tunisia | | Israel |

**Source:**World Economic Forum,2011:11

Last but not least, the demographic explosion in the southern Mediterranean is certainly one major factor for the difficulty of authoritarian regimes to keep in power. Young people who are influenced by the globalised 24/7 news culture do not want to miss on opportunities that national counterparts have in other countries. The Arab Spring is also the quest for normalcy in an integrated glocalised world. Although it is to easy to make an assessment, the lack of opportunities, corruption, clientelism and patronage were certainly factors to protest across

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the Arab world. The high level of unemployment in an economy that lacks efficiency clearly played a major role in the Arab Spring. Desperation led to the call for more dignity in the way they live in the respective country. In all these countries between 40 and 55 percent are young people, who clearly are fed up with the lack of democratic structures and prospects for the future.

**TABLE 3.DATA ON POPULATION AND GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT AT PURCHASING POWER PARITY(PPP), ESTIMATES IN 2010**

| COUNTRY | POPULATION (Millions)(2010) | SHARE OF YOUNG PEOPLE(2010) | GDP per Person in Thousand US Dollars(2010) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Morocco | 32.4 | 47.7 | 4.7 |
| Mauritania | 3.4 | 59.3 | 1.9 |
| Algeria | 35.9 | 47.5 | 8.2 |
| Tunisia | 10.4 | 42.1 | 8.6 |
| Libya | 6.5 | 47.4 | 18.7 |
| Egypt | 84.6 | 52.3 | 5.9 |
| Jordan | 6.4 | 54.3 | 5.2 |
| Syria | 22.5 | 55.3 | 4.7 |
| Lebanon | 4.3 | 42.7 | 13.4 |
| Palestinian Authorities | 4.1 | 64.4 | 2.9(2008) |

Source:The Economist, 3rd of February 2011, 17th of February 2011

Therefore, in this paper we want to analyse what is the present situation of the two countries that are at the centre of the peaceful movement related to the Arab Spring:Egypt and Tunisia and then, in the subsequent section what has been so far the role of the European Union in this respect. Before that, it is important to shed some light on the policies of the EU towards the Mediterranean and particularly the role of the Union for the Mediterranean. Last but not least, some conclusions will be drawn.

**The European Union  and the Mediterranean :A Difficult relationship**

In a time of post-colonialism and global governance, the European Union symbolises a new kind of politics which tries to avoid the use of force in order to achieve its aims.  The characterisation of the European Union as a ´civilian power´  or ´normative power´ clearly shows the will of the EU to move from a world of  states based on a Westphalian system of international relations to something new but not undefined called multilateral global governance/global politics .(Magone,2006:241-256 ;Attina,2011)  The EU is at the moment the champion of soft power, because there is no overarching consensus among its members to develop also a hard power strategy. In the present situation of an economically declining United States and rising China, the present position of  the European Union has become quite dangerous. At the moment, the world is characterised by inconclusive struggles of hegemony related to old style politics common in a system of international relations dominated by states.(Attinà,2011:84-100) However, the ever increasing shift from the old  international relations system to the new global governance one, requires still that the EU uses old style politics in order to achieve a new world order based on principles of social market capitalism. This transition will last at least until 2025 and may lead to traditional war games between the existing super power.  The European Union cannot stand by and just use diplomatic and financial means to make its voice heard. It needs also military hard power in order to promote multilateralism and peace.( Attinà,2003:79-83; Modelski,2000:50-51).

The Mediterranean is probably one of the areas of utmost strategic interest for the European Union.  The oil reserves of the region are still important for the development of the economies of  the European Union.  Moreover, political, economic and social instability in the region may in the end lead to a spill-over upon the European Union. Particularly, the demographic explosion in the region is a cause of concern for a stagnating or decreasing European population. In the new strategy of the EU, it is clearly stated that the Mediterranean is of utmost strategic importance due to its oil reserves. The document states as follows:

> The Southern Mediterranean is strategically important for the EU in terms of **security of gas and oil supplies** from some of the countries but also more broadly in terms of transit from the region and beyond. There is clear potential for building an EUMediterranean partnership in the production and management of renewables, in particular solar and wind energy, and in having a joined-up approach to ensuring energy security. Joint renewable energy investments in the Southern Mediterranean in line with the EU's 2050 decarbonisation scenario could offer the possibility of a new partnership provided that the right market perspective is created for electricity imports.
> **It is desirable to open a credible perspective for the integration of the Southern**
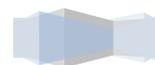
**Mediterranean in the EU internal energy market based on a differentiated and gradual approach.** In the mid to long term, this would mean establishing a form of 'EU-Southern Mediterranean Energy Community' starting with the Maghreb countries and possibly expanding progressively to the Mashreq. Extending the Energy Community Treaty with the Union's Eastern and South-Eastern neighbours, or building on its experience, this community should cover relevant parts of the EU's energy legislation with a view to promoting a real and reliable convergence of South Mediterranean partners' energy policies with EU policy.
(European Commission and High Representative,2011a:9-10)

A EC/EU policy towards Mediterranean started already in the 1970s and was based on cooperation agreements with the southern Mediterranean countries. The socalled Global Mediterranean Policy(1972-1991)  was not able to achieve major changes in the region. Between 1992 and 1995, a New Mediterranean Policy was created with new instruments in order to speed up the process of transformation in the southern Mediterranean. One of the characteristics of the new Mediterranean Policy was its bottom up approach, focusing more on civil society organisations in order to induce change(Feliu,Salomon,2000:192-200). Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, the Mediterranean became also an important area to achieve more security cooperation.(Aliboni,1996).  A socalled Conference on Security and Cooperation in the Mediterranean was established in the 1990s and had its fourth conference in 2005 in Malta, La Valetta.

Apart from this security dimension, cooperation in the Mediterranean has intensified considerably in the past two decades. One important factor has been the Barcelona process which was started during the Spanish presidency in November 1995.  The original idea of the Barcelona process was follow very much the model of the Organisation of Security and Cooperation in Europe by slowly bringing the southern Mediterranean closer to Europe.  The use of bilateral agreements that were monitored by a Council consisting of representatives of the European Union and the respective country, should ensure a closer economic, social, security and political relationship between the European Union and the Mediterranean. (Magone,2006:264-265).

**TABLE 4.FUNDING FOR EURO-MEDITERRANEAN PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN 1995-2013**

| FUNDING FOR EURO-MEDITERRANEAN PARTNERSHIP | € billion |
|---|---|
| European Investment Bank Loans (2000-2007) | 11 |
| European Investment Bank  Loans(2007-2013) | 6 |
| MEDA I(1995-1999) | 3.4 |
| MEDA II(2000-2007) | 5.4 |
| European Neighbourhood Policy Instrument-ENPI(2007-2013) | 12 |
| **TOTAL(1995-2013)** | **37.8** |

**Source**:Huber,2008:53; Hunt,2011:177

By 2013, the EU  would have provided at least over 37.8 billion Euros in order to transform the Mediterranean region, not counting the recent initiatives. The funding was not very much for the number of countries in the Maghreb and Mashreq, however its symbolic and strategic value could not be underestimated. The basic idea of the project is simple.  Economic development would in the end empower people to challenge the autocratic governments in the region, so that they would introduce major political reforms.  Moreover, the EU would include political conditionality clauses related to political reform in the respective countries in order to achieve change.  The EU tried also to follow a difficult bottom-up strategy by financing many civil society or local projects. These projects were sometimes resisted by the ruling elites due to the example that they may set for other communities. In the end, the whole approach of the EU led to a stagnation due to the fact that the gatekeepers of any project remained the respective governments in the region.(Youngs,2001:83-90;Youngs,2002:46-60)

After one decade, it became clear that the whole project of a Euro-mediterranean partnership was stagnating.  Apart from the fact, that the EU had to deal with autocracies which were keen to have relations with EU, but not very pleased with attempts of interference in their own domestic sphere.  The overall aim to construct a new region based on the principles and values of the European Union became quite difficult to implement. The Euromorphism tendencies of the EU became even more clear when they decided to replace the Euro-mediterranean partnership by the broader European Neighbourhood Policy.  Although strategically probably sensible, it weakened even more the idea of a euromorph regional

economic integration which should at some time become a Euromediterranean free trade area. The instruments of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership were replaced by those of the the European Neighbourhood Policy(ENP) (Youngs, 2009; Haukkala,2008) .

In 2008, President Nicolas Sarkozy re-launched the relationship of the EU and the region by proposing a Union for the Mediterranean just for the Mediterranean countries. It meant that non-Mediterranean countries of the European Union would be excluded from the project. After considerable opposition from Germany and other member-states like the UK, the original project was watered down to a huge organisation comprising over 43 states.   The programme of the UfM is also quite dependent on contributions from all member-states and private donors and not only the European Union.  The focus on projects restricts the role of the UfM to a technical intergovernmental group.(Hunt,2011; Balfour,2009).  The UfM will concentrate on six specific project led areas:

- De-pollution of the Mediterranean
- Maritime and land highways
- Civil protection
- Alternative energies: Mediterranean solar plan
- Higher education and research, Euro-Mediterranean University
- The Mediterranean Business Initiative(UfM,2011a)

 Since its inception, the Union for the Mediterranean based in Barcelona has not been able to do any important work.  The old problems related to the relationship between Israel and the Palestinian authority played a major role in delaying the institutionalisation process. Until November 2010, the Union for the Mediterranean was just funded by a grant of the European Commission. This grant was about 780,000 for the first year, and the budget should afterwards be financed by all 43 member-states.  However, the continuing conflicts between the southern member-states created major problems for the secretariat.   Due to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict no meetings took place. Moreover, secretary general of the Union for the Mediterranean,  the Jordanian Ahmed Mas´adeh  resigned on 28 January 2011  after just one year in office. One of the main reasons was the lack of  financial and human resources support for the project. (EUObserver, 27 January 2011)  A new secretary general  Youssef Amrani from Morocco was only appointed in May and began to work end of July 2011. Throughout the Arab Spring the Union for the Mediterranean was not present in the discussion.  It was just busy dealing with its own crisis.  Also the Parliamentary Assembly of the Union for the Mediterranean is still in the making. At the present, the European Parliament is negotiating with Belgium to get a secretariat for the PA of the UFM. Probably,

a compromise solution will be chosen , by giving to the secretariat a  non-governmental organisation status due to the fact that parliamentary assemblies are not covered by international law.(Magone,2011). According to the website of UfM, the first project was approved on 22 June 2011.  It is a desalination project for the Gaza strip which also includes a water distribution system, in order to overcome the supply deficit that exists in the region. The project is funded with €100,000(UfM,2011b)

In sum, EU policies towards the Mediterranean have been so far failing, because of  its technocratic top-down character.  The Union for the Mediterranean bears the same problems as the previous Euro-Mediterranean partnership.  The permanent Israeli-Palestinian conflict is a major problem for the normalization of relations between the member-states of the Mediterranean.

**Democratic transitions in Tunisia and Egypt: Lessons from Democratization Theory**

Although the Maghreb and Mashreq countries have their cultural specificities, it is important to  look at our comparative knowledge of similar transition processes that took place since the Portuguese Revolution of Carnations on 25th of April 1974. Transitology has become a major area of research and many authors have developed models in order to study it.(Pridham,1995;Huntington, 1991;  O´Donnell and Schmitter,1986 and Grugel,2002 ).  In spite of many models that were produced over the years, Dankwart Rustow´s seminal article in Comparative Politics which  was published in 1970  set the standards for the discipline. His temporal roadmap towards successful democratic transition is valid today. Indeed, we can apply his phases of democratic transition to the present developments in Tunisia and Egypt. Rustow also open up the discussion about the possibility that a functional approach to democratization through modernization which dominated the thinking of the 1960s in the United States is not necessarily the main factor leading up to a successful democracy. Instead, he proposed a genetic approach to democracy which clearly centered on the analysis of phases of democratic transition.  Rustow´s propositions were as follows:

1. The factors that keep a democracy stable may not be the ones that brought it into existence:explanations of democracy must distinguish between function and genesis;
2. Correlation is not the same as causation:a genetic theory must concentrate on the latter;
3. Not all causal links run from social and economic to political factors;
4. Not all causal links run from beliefs and attitudes to actions;
5. *The genesis of democracy need not be geographically uniform:there may be many roads to democracy;*

6. *The genesis of democracy need not be temporally uniform: different factors may become crucial during successive phases;*
7. *The genesis of democracy need not be socially uniform: even in the same place and time the attitudes that promote it may not be the same for politicians and for common citizens;*
8. *Empirical data in support of a genetic theory must cover, for any given country, a time period from just before until just after the advent of democracy;*
9. To examine the logic of transformation *within* political systems, we may leave aside countries where a major impetus came from abroad;
10. A model or ideal type of the transition may be derived from a close examination of two or three empirical cases and tested by application to the rest.(Rustow,1970:68-69)

What Dankwart Rustow tried to say is that each country has its cultural specificities and spatio-temporal frame in order to move to democracy.  Some will move faster towards stable democratic structures, others latter, and in some cases will fail to do so.

In this paper we will concentrate on the temporal scheme of Rustow. He differentiates between a pre-transition background condition and three phases of democratic transition. For Rustow a background condition is that national unity is taken for granted, there are no groups questioning the national unity. It means also there are no secessionist movements trying to create a separate state. (Rustow,1970:350-1). Interrelated is the fact that  "no minimal level of social and economic development is necessary as a pre-requisite for democracy"(Rustow,1970:352). This means that any country in the world which are either in the pre-modern, modern or post-modern phase of development can become a democracy according to the genetic theory.

If the background condition of a taken for granted national unity is accepted, democratic transition takes place over three main phases, which may be short or long according to the struggle between the political and other elites(military, economic) in the individual phases.

The first phase of transition is called by Rustow as a preparatory phase which is characterised by "a prolonged and inconclusive political struggle" between the different groups challenging the former elites.  It is a period in which none of the social groups competing for power are able to dominate. This inconclusive preparatory phase may degenerate into chaos or a return to the previous or new authoritarian regimes. It may also lead to seccession if the competing groups are organised along regional lines.(Rustow,1970:352-355)

 Therefore it is crucial, that the preparatory phase is replaced by the second phase of decision-making which will lead to a successful constitutional settlement agreed between all relevant social groups. The constitutional settlement has to be endorsed by all relevant parties who hopefully were previously elected through a fair electoral system.  If the constitutional

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settlement is imposed by a particular group, without consultation of other groups it is doomed to fail.  The best example of such negative outcome is Turkey, in which the military played a major role in forcing a  constitution on the civilian politicians.  In the end, Turkish democracy has been interrupted by several periods of military dictatorship.(McClaren,2010).

The third phase according to Rustow is the habituation phase or according to other authors such as Geoffrey Pridham or Philippe Schmitter the phase of ´early´consolidation.  In this period, political groups begin to live by the new rules of the game. In spite of some conflicts that may emerge due to loopholes in the overall institutional framework, it may deemed successful if after one or two electoral cycles alternation in power has been peaceful and ordered. It means that the democratic game became the only game in town. Only after this phase of political and economic consolidation other partial regimes essential to democracy such as the interest groups system or further consolidation and democratization of the judiciary will take place(Pridham,1990;Schmitter,1992)

**Figure 3. Phases of Democratic Transition according to Dankwart A. Rustow(1970)**



**Source:**own graph based on Rustow,1970:350-361

If we follow Rustow´s stages of democratic transition neither the Tunisian Jasmin Revolution, nor the Egyptian Tahrir Square Revolution have reached the decision phase. Both are stuck at the moment in the preparatory phase. In both cases, political parties are awaiting elections to the Constituent Assembly to take place in October in Tunisia and

probably November in Egypt . In both countries, elections were postponed by three months in order to give more time for political parties to prepare themselves for those. If we compare the democratic transition in Tunisia and in Egypt, the former is certainly the more successful one, because the government of national unity comprises both "old" and "new" elite members. Lets look more closely at the present state of both transitions.

In Tunisia, one can really speak of a Revolution of the people. About 200 people were killed in the demonstrations until and even after dictator Ben Ali went into exile. The origins of the uprising is not very clear. The narrative starts always with Mohamed Bouazizi , an unemployed graduate living in the rural town of Sidi Bouzei. He tried to sell vegetables in the market place, but he was prevented to do so, because he had no permit. He was allegedly beaten up by the police. This led him to set himself on fire, because he did not see any future for his life. The incident happened on 17 December 2010. Soon afterwards young people went to streets protesting against the lack of prospects for their future. It is estimated that inofficially over 40 percent of the young are unemployed. When they leave university, there are normally no jobs for them.(Murphy,2011:300).

The Tunisian government headed by interim president Mebazaa includes six ministers from the former regime, including interim prime minister Beji Caid Essebsi. Three leaders from the opposition parties were appointed ministers to the government of national unity: Ahmed Ibrahim(Ettajidid Party), Najjib Chebbi(Progressive Democratic Party) and Mustafa Ben Jaafar(Union of Freedom and Labour), who later pulled out. The waiting for new elections and better living conditions is creating disappointment among the citizens in Tunisia, but if we compare with other democratic transitions, so far the process has been peaceful and exemplary. The overall press freedom and human rights climate has improved considerably. The main fear for the more secular political classes of the old regime and the new political parties is the role that the Islamic party Al En-Nahda(Renewal Party) of politician Rachid Ghannouchi may play in the future. The programme of the Islamic party is moderate and based on pluralism. It may the party that will reach the highest share of the vote in the upcoming elections to the Constituent Assembly on 23 October.
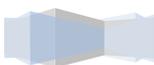
**TABLE FIVE:POLITICAL PARTIES IN TUNISIA AUGUST 2011**

| PARTIES | IDEOLOGY | LEADER |
|---|---|---|
| En-nahda(Renaissance Party) [1981] | Moderate islamist party | Rachid Ghannouchi |
| Progressive Democratic Party[1988] | Social liberalism | Najjib Chebbi |
| Ettajidid Movement [1993] | Centre Left | Mohammed Harmel |
| Union of Labour and Freedom[1994] | Social Democracy | Mustafa Ben Jaafar |
| Tunisian Workers´Communist Party(PCOT) [1986] | Communism | Hamma Hammami |
| Al Watan(The Nation) | Centrist(connected to old elites) | Mohammed Jegham |

**Source:** own compilation based on the information from websites of political parties and news from newspapers. Still preliminary

In a survey sponsored by International Republican Institute / USAID and conducted in May 2011, there is a growing disappointment with the democratic process.  There is a perception that the economic situation is deteriorating and this is also affecting negatively on the population.  Moreover, the main priorities are security(36 percent)  and employment(27 percent).  The organization of elections is just the fourth priority with merely 7 percent of respondents ticking this as first priority. This matches with the perceived problems that Tunisia is facing now. According to the survey, the main problems are internal security and unemployment.  As a third problem, the economic and financial crisis is mentioned. Furthermore, the vast majority of 82 percent was unaware of the three Commissions that were founded to address issues of political corruption, political reform and human rights violations. Another interesting finding of the survey is that 86 percent would vote in the forthcoming elections, however a majority of 72 percent do not know in whom they will vote for. One positive finding of the survey is that the majority of the population wants a secular

government. Moreover, a large minority approves of a moderate Islamic party. It means that the Tunisian electorate is quite moderate and secular ideas of politics, such as the separation of politics and religion seems to prevail. Last but least, the survey asked which kind of international organisations should Tunisia support. Both the Union of the Mediterranean, the European Union and World Bank fared quite well in the survey. NATO and the African Union got the lowest support from the International Organisations mentioned. (IRI,2011)

In a survey conducted 9-15 June 2011, 67 percent of voters are still undecided for whom to vote for. However, the trend seems to be towards the moderate Islamic party En-nadha(14 percent). The second strongest party is the Progressive Democratic Party with 5 percent, followed by the Democratic Federation for Labour and Freedom with 2 percent , Party of Congress and the Republic and the Tunisian Communist Labour Party each with one percent. The most known parties are Ennahdha ( 71 percent), the Progressive Democratic Party (25 percent), Ettajdid(Renewal) (12.5 percent), Communist Party(12.3 percent), Al Watan(The Nation)(6.3 percent), and the Social democrats movement(6 percent). (Tunisia News Agency, 7 July 2011)

In another survey conducted by Al-Jazeera Centre for Studies and Media between 28 May and 2 June 2011, it was confirmed that 54 percent of voters were undecided. Moreover, En-Nahda under the leadership of Rachid Ghannouchi was the most voted party with 21 percent, before the Progressive Democratic Party with 8 percent and the Communist Party with 5 percent.(Al Jazeera online,6 July 2011)

It seems that the Constituent Assembly will be dominated by several moderate parties. Ennahdha has been working hard to show its commitment to a pluralist society and a moderate Islam. Rachid Ghannouchi and his followers have been active in contacting US representatives in Congress and the US government, in order to show their peaceful pluralist foundations of moderate Islam. The Progressive Democratic Party under the leadership of Ahmed Nejib Chebbi is a social liberal party which emphasises democratic rights, separation of state and religion and also includes in its programme social welfare policies for the marginalized parts of the population. These two parties seem to be the dominant ones.

One factor of stability in the country has been the Army. It has remained loyal to the process of democratization. This is also one of the institutions most trusted by the population according to the opinion polls conducted by the International Republican Institute and
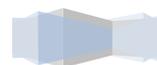
USAID.(IRI,2011). In contrast, the police is not trusted due to its close relationship to the previous regime.

One important factor for the future of Tunisian democratic transition will be a successful conduct of the 23 October elections. The establishment of a Political reform and elections commission which is charge of the process has certainly contributed to more credibility within and outside Tunisia. The Tunisian politicians are aware that they set the standards of the Arab Spring, so that they clearly want moderation in the whole process to prevail. In terms of electoral results, it would be of advantage if none of the major parties would win an outright absolute majority, so that there is a space for consensus and inclusion of issues that are of concern for all sections of society.

One major problem of any transition to democracy is the deterioration of the economy. Indeed, the Tunisian Jasmine Revolution led to the collapse of the Tourism industry. However, a successful management of the democratic transition may be a chance to make Tunisia even more popular than during the authoritarian regime.

In contrast to Tunisia, Egypt is moving with more difficulty towards democracy. One major problem is that the country is still under emergency law. The Supreme Council of the Armed Forces(SCAF)  are leading the democratization process, and the signs so far are not very positive. In August 2011, the SCAF circulated a document about inviolable rights of the constitution which should be discussed among the political parties. The intention of the SCAF is to pre-empt the constitutional settlement by setting a frame to what is possible to negotiate in the future constitution. The document defined the "Arab Republic of Egypt as a civil, democratic state based on citizenship and the rule of law, and that it respects pluralism. Article two defines Islam as state religion and main source of legislation, however with a sentence stating the tolerance of religious freedom for non-Muslim minorities. After the referendum on 31 March 2011, such framework was already approved by the population, and should be used as a framework for the elaboration of a new constitution after the elections to the Constituent Assembly.(Al Ahram,18-24 August 2011). There is some fear of most political groups that the army is trying to keep a role for itself during and after the constitutional settlement. In this sense, the Egyptian democratic transition shares many traits with several Turkish democratic transition. The Turkish military imposed a constitutional settlement that the parties had to adhered to, if not they would return to military dictatorship.(comp. McClaren,2010). Only in the past decade there has been an effort of the
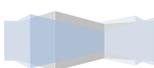
dominant Justice and Development Party (*Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi-AKP*) to push back the power of the military. The climax was the attempt of the military to stage a coup that was defeated by the AKP government.  About 250 officers were arrested and tried by civilian courts. Even the resignation of highest ranking military against decisions concerning the military taken by the government could not  change the resolve of Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan.(BBC News,26 February 2010;BBC News,16 December 2010;BBC News,26 July 2011;Financial Times, 30 July 2011).

The main purpose of the imposed document with inviolable constitutional principles is to prevent the establishment of a Islamic state like in Iran dominated by the main religious groups, the moderate Muslim brotherhood and the more radical Salafit. Some more moderate parties accepted the document, but not its binding nature, while the Islamic parties rejected outrightly.(Al-Ahram,18-24 August 2011).

Another major difference to Tunisia is that the roadmap is quite uncertain. At time of writing it was still not known when elections would take place. Basically, the elections to the Constituent Assembly were delayed from September to now November, but without a concrete date.

Among the political parties, the Muslim Brotherhood has the better chances to win a majority, other political parties are still building their party political structures.  It seems also that the military supreme council is not very happy with the logistic support for democratic parties undertaken by the United States.  According to the newspaper Al-Ahram there are tensions between Cairo and Washington D.C. about the financing of pro-democracy groups through USAID.  It led to the resignation of the head of operations of USAID in Cairo. Political parties in Egypt are forbidden to take funding from  foreign governments or organisations.  However, it seems that USAID is not directly funding these parties, but providing capacity building  courses through Non-governmental organisations to these party activists. According to US Assistant Jeffery Feltman:

> "We do not give the political parties bags of money. We only provide training and capacity- building programmes that help Egyptians to create an open and democratic system.  Washington respects Egypt's sovereignty and is ready to work with whatever political forces Egyptians choose for the coming elections,"… the US "does not choose the winners of the elections, the Egyptian people does."(Al-Ahram,18-24 August 2011)

According to a Pew Institute opinion survey conducted between 24 March and 7 April 2011 and  released on 25 April 2011  as part of the larger Spring Pew Global Attitudes Survey which took place in 22 countries including Egypt, it seems that one third of the population is close to the Islamic fundamentalists, which have more supporters in the middle and higher classes in Egypt, but less so among the poorer strata of the population. Another third of the population supports the 6th of April movement which is also supported by the poorer segments of the population.(Pew Institute,2011).

In terms of political parties, the Wafd party and the Muslim Brotherhood are placed best for the forthcoming elections in November.  The latter has been quite adamant in reiterating that they would respect pluralism and the democratic order. This attitude clearly created an excellent pre-condition for a more moderate, less polarised climate in Egypt.  They also belong the Democratic Alliance of Political Parties which try to speak with one voice in relation to the military Supreme Council.
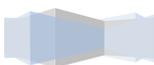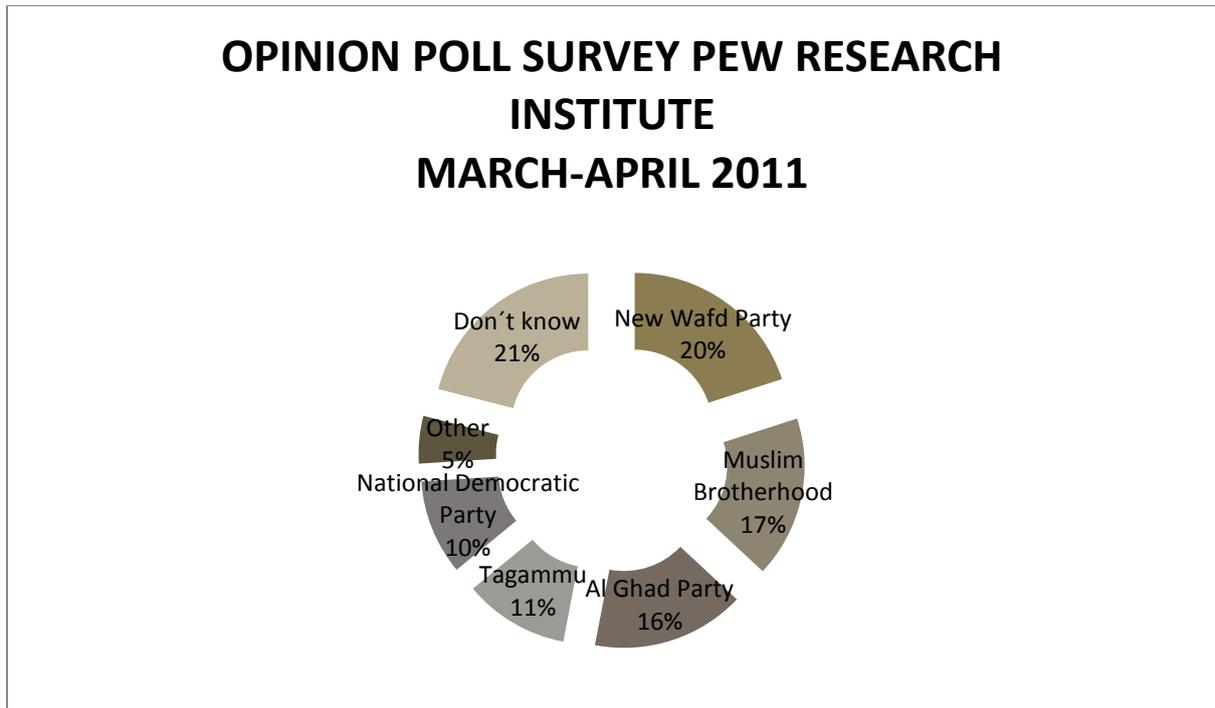
**Figure 4.Opinion Poll Survey of Pew Research Institute March-April 2011**

## OPINION POLL SURVEY PEW RESEARCH INSTITUTE MARCH-APRIL 2011



SOURCE:PEW RESEARCH INSTITUTE, U.S. WINS NO FRIENDS, END OF TREATY WITH ISRAEL SOUGHT EGYPTIANS EMBRACE REVOLT LEADERS, RELIGIOUS PARTIES AND MILITARY, AS WELL,POSTED ON WEBSITE: HTTP://PEWGLOBAL.ORG/2011/04/25/EGYPTIANS-EMBRACE-REVOLT-LEADERS-RELIGIOUS-PARTIES-AND-MILITARY-AS-WELL/4/ ACCESSED ON 28 AUGUST 2011

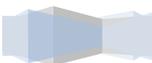**TABLE 4.MAIN POLITICAL PARTIES IN EGYPT BEFORE THE NOVEMBER 2011 ELECTIONS**

| PARTY | IDEOLOGY | FOUNDATION YEAR | LEADER |
|---|---|---|---|
| New *Wafd* Party(New Delegation) | Nationalist Liberal | 1919 | Sayyid Badawi |
| *Hizb al-Horriya W Alaadala Party*(Muslim Brotherhood- Justice and Freedom-Hurrih) | Islamic moderate | 30 April 2011 (movement since 1928) | Muhamed Mursi |
| Al Ghad Party (Tomorrow Party) | Liberal centre | October 2004 | Ayman Nour |
| *Hizb al* **Tagammu'** *al Watani al Taqadomi al Wahdawi* (National Progressive Unionist Party | Socialist party | 1977 | Dr. Mohamed Refaat Al-Saaed |
| National Democratic Party | Liberal Party | 2007 | Osama Al Ghazali Harb |

The New Wafd Party formed a coalition with the Muslim Brotherhood and other 14 smaller parties on 13 June 2011. This was important to present a united front in relation to the Supreme Council. However, the document presented by the military led to disagreements within the coalition, particularly between the Wafd Party and the Justice and Freedom party. However, there is a strong effort by the Justice and Freedom party to accommodate differences and negotiate a consensus with the other parties. Tagammu party decided to leave the Democratic Alliance of Political Parties on the grounds that it could not support the document proposed by the military.

On 6th of August, the Justice and Freedom party conducted a public internal election in order to boost its image of being a transparent ,democratic and accountable party. The new party has been characterized by internal squabbles and tensions. Some hardliners want a

more concrete programme, while the moderates prefer a more  liberal  one.  (Reuters,6 August 2011).

One of the major problems still for the credibility of the democratization process is that the military did not suspend emergency law legislation.  Indeed, still after the Revolution 10,000 activists were put in jail and tried in military courts.(Al-Ahram,18-24 August 2011).

The trial of Hosni Mubarak has also to be regarded with suspicion, due to the fact that many of his supporters are still in power. None of the opposition political parties are sharing power with the military supreme council. In this sense, the preparatory phase of inconclusive struggle between the military and political elite can still implode if the electoral process is further delayed or rigged.

In sum, it is still too early to make an assessment about the democratic transition in Egypt and Tunisia. It seems, that Tunisia stands at the moment a better chance to move towards stable democratic institutions than Egypt.  The dominance of the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces in Egypt and the continuation of emergency law are certainly negative factors undermining the credibility of the democratization process.

**The European Union, the Union for the Mediterranean and the Arab Spring**

One of the major problems for the European Union to speak with one voice are the divergences between the major member-states. Colonial legacies still play a major role in national foreign policy, and sometimes supersede the importance of a consistent European Union policy. (Mayall,2005).  From the very start, the Union for the Mediterranean was too busy with its own internal paralysis, that the EU had to take a leading role. In an interview to the Spanish newspaper El Pais new general secretary to the Union for Mediterranean Youssef Amrani was adamant that regional integration and democracy are interrelated.  However, he also made clear that the EU has no right to interfere in the kind of democratization that countries may choose. This clearly shows quite differences between north and south.(El Pais online, 5 July 2011). However, the reaction of High Representative for the Union of Foreign Affairs was deemed as slow from the very start.  Just slowly, the EU institutions were able to respond to the Arab Spring. Lots of criticism came particularly from the European Parliament.  On 11 May 2011 High Representative Catherine Ashton had to report on the EU policies towards the Arab Spring at the European Parliament.  In her speech she particularly
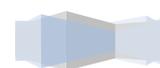
emphasised the issue of democracy.   She differentiated between ´surface´ and ´deep´ democracy, but also the need to be cautious in terms of not reverting to neo-colonial positions. Particularly, the issue of democracy was emphasised and compared to the slow process towards democracy that many countries in Europe had to undergo. The democratization process in southern,central and eastern Europe is barely  four and two decades old respectively.  Some humility had to be practiced.  In this sense, the position of the EU changed considerably highlighting now the importance to support ´deep´democracy efforts, not just ´surface´ones.  As Catherine Ashton states as follows:

> [D]emocracy is of course about votes and elections – but it is also about far more than that. What we in Europe have learned the hard way is that we need "deep democracy": respect for the rule of law, freedom of speech, respect for human rights, an independent judiciary and impartial administration. It requires enforceable property rights and free trade unions. It is not just about changing governments, but about building the right institutions and the right attitudes. In the long run, "surface democracy", democracy that floats on the top – people casting their votes freely on election day and choosing their governments – will not survive if "deep democracy" fails to take root.(Ashton,2011:2)

The Arab Spring seems to have been a wake up call for the European Union to return to its values based on democracy, human rights and rule of law.  Democratization is now regarded as a pre-condition for a successful partnership with the southern Mediterranean countries.(Echagüe et. al., 2011: 329-331  ).  Indeed, the European Union is the best example of a ´regional community of democratic states´.  The whole approach of European integration has been based on strengthening democratic institutions.  The southern, central and eastern European democratization processes were very much framed by the European Community/European Union.  Particularly, the central and eastern European countries had to implement the socalled Copenhagen criteria.   The Copenhagen criteria included the establishment of a functioning democracy(in terms of depth, not so much in terms of surface), the establishment of a functioning liberal market economy, the respect for human rights and the rights of ethnic minorities and last but least, the ability to transpose the ever increasing acquis communautaire.(Whitehead, 2001:395-397;Magone, 106-108)

 A lighter form of such criteria exist already through the socalled bilateral agreements which were signed with each southern Mediterranean country. The association agreements are dominated by an adjustment of the political, economic and social framework of the particular country to the European Union.   Through the European Neighbourhood Policy these countries receive funding to implement socalled multi-annual action plans. The socalled European Neighbourhood Policy Instrument  (ENPI) provides funding to restructure the
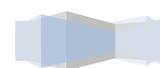
political, economic and social systems towards the European Union. This policy of euromorphism had its limits during the authoritarian-autocratic rule in southern Mediterranean countries before the Arab Spring, however the Arab Spring may have changed the perspective of the EU towards these countries.

Firstly, the European Union is using more the political conditionality-stick and carrot-instrument in order to push for reform and help the civil society groups that were fighting for freedom;

Secondly, civil society capacity building facility has become an important aspect of the new strategy. There were far more contacts with civil society groups in the past six months, particularly with the delegations of the European Parliament(Magone,2011).

Thirdly, although economic restructuring is still the most important aspect of the European Neighbourhood Policy, the political dimension has become more important. The EU is engaged in technocratic democracy building and assistance programmes.(see Crawford,2000; Crawford, 2001, see also Magone,2006:106-108).

In an excellent analysis of democracy assistance done by the European Union and the United States in the southern Mediterranean before the Middle East, she found out that the EU itself is dominated by a top-down approach, while the US more a bottom-up one. However, she also recognises that the member-states particularly Germany through its party foundations were quite engaged at local level. There is also a strong concentration of funding in the Palestinian Authority for both the US and the EU. Another difference is that the US policy is dominated by USAID while the EU´s policies are quite fragmented in different programmes. Three programmes are quite relevant for the European Union:European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights(EIDHR) which focus on democratic capacity building and also support for civil society organisations, the then Euro-Mediterranean Partnership through its three baskets(economic,political-security, cultural) and the European Neighbourhood Policy.(Huber,2008).

The shift of policy from an economic to a more political one can be found in the document ´A Partnership For Democracy And Shared Prosperity With The Southern Mediterranean´ from 8 March 2011.(European Commission and High Representative ,2011a;European Commission and High Representative ,2011b) In this document, the Arab Spring and the uprising of the people are mentioned as marking a new era in the relationship between the EU

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and the southern Mediterranean.  Although the vast majority of the paper is dedicated by issues related to economic reform and  Euromorphist language of adjustment to the EU, a successful democratization process becomes a sine qua non for the partnership.  The new partnership shall be built on three pillars:

- democratic transformation and institution-building, with a particular focus on fundamental freedoms, constitutional reforms, reform of the judiciary and the fight against corruption
- a stronger partnership with the people, with specific emphasis on support to civil society and on enhanced opportunities for exchanges and people-to-people contacts with aparticular focus on the young
- sustainable and inclusive growth and economic development especially support to Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), vocational and educational training, improving health and education systems and development of the poorer regions(European Commission  and High Representative,2011:2)

This approach is still in the beginning and the immediate measures were about containment and management of the immigration waves, particularly from Tunisia. The funding is low and spread among many areas.

In a speech on 14 July 2011 at the Opera House in Cairo, President of the Commission José Manuel Barroso clearly made a valuable comparison between the southern European transitions to democracies in the 1970s and the situation in the Arab world.  He clearly emphasised that there different roads to democracy and one should not underestimate the aspirations of the people for basic democracy and human rights.  He states as follows:

> At the time many negative voices were saying that Southern Europe because of its level of development or cultural reasons would not be able to establish stable democracies. And just look at how strong democracy has consolidated and the inspiration that this was for other regions of the world such as Latin America. I also remember that some people said that post-communist countries would never be able to embrace a new democratic culture and just look at the thriving democracies and open societies of these countries who also joined the European Union in 2004. So I firmly reject the idea that because of cultural differences Muslim majority countries cannot be at one with democracy. Such prejudices reveal deep ignorance, and a deeper disregard for human aspiration. All countries and peoples are fit fordemocracy and to think otherwise is an unacceptable moral prejudice. Men and women choose freedom time and again when given the choice.
> To all those who refuse to believe that Arab streets and squares can be filled with the peaceful call for freedom and dignity: I point to the people of Cairo and to the people of Egypt. Your moral fortitude can continue to defeat the forces of hatred andfear(Barroso,2011:3).

Barroso then speaks of new initiatives that will be announced in September related to the new democratization strategy of the European Union. Apart from the € 7 bn allocated through the European Neighbourhood policy for the coming three years and additional € 6 bn from the

European Investment Bank, the G8 promised also a further € 20 bn for the region.(Barroso,2011:4).

More interesting are the new initiatives directly related to the Arab Spring. He announces three initiatives that will be used for the development of the region.

Firstly, he mentions SPRING(Support for Partnership, Reform and Inclusive Growth), which will target the present process of democratic transition and economic reform. The envelope will be about € 350 million in first instance, and increase to €500 million for the period 2011-13.

Secondly, a new independent body called European Endowment for Democracy will be created emulating, I guess, the US American European Endowment for Democracy. The main is to create "a new independent body dedicated to helping people find their authentic democratic voices."

Last but not least, the the Marie Curie and Erasmus programmes will be upgraded by 40 percent allowing up to 750 Students to be part of a exchange scheme.

Moreover, the EU will also enter a deeper partnership with selected countries, among them Egypt and Tunisia, which will lead to increased mobility, at first of students, artists and business people.(Barroso,2011:5).

Before the Arab Spring, Tunisia was probably one of the most advanced partners within the European Neighbourhood Policy. An association agreement was signed in 1995, and came into force in 1998. It was expected that Tunisia and the EU would create a free trade area by end of 2010.

In the case of Tunisia, the EU is working closely with the National Commission of Political Reform and Elections created after the uprising in order to organise and manage the electoral processes of democratic transition. About € 17 million were allocated for this task which also cover the Electoral Observation mission of the EU. Elections are scheduled for 23 October 2011. There is also an effort of the EU coordinate efforts with other international organizations in Tunisia and Egypt.(European Commission,2011:2).

Further € 110 million were allocated for socio-economic measures. The large bulk went for socioeconomic relief measures, and € 20 million are used to increase the competitiveness of small and medium sized enterprises.(European Commission, 2011c).

The Tunisian government also signed three international conventions, including the accession to the International Criminal Court and the Convention against Torture(EEAS,2011a;EEAS,2011b).

An Association agreement between the EU and Egypt was signed in 2001 and came into force in 2004. It replaced the long standing cooperation agreement signed in 1977. Similar to the Tunisian association agreement, the document is dominated by Euromorphist language. Political issues were not discussed in length. Article can be found in probably all agreements and is certainly the only political aspect that appears in the entire document. Article 2 is as follows:

> Relations between the Parties, as well as all the provisions of the Agreement itself, shall be based on respect of democratic principles and fundamental human rights as set out in the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, which guides their internal and international policy and constitutes an essential element of this Agreement.(Euro-Mediterranean Agreement,2001:5)

And article 4

> The political dialogue shall cover all subjects of common interest, and, in particular peace, security, democracy and regional development.(Euro-Mediterranean Agreement,2011:6).

The Egyptian Tahrir Square movement has had so far major difficulties to change the regime. The Supreme Council of the Armed Forces continue to steer the process of democratization without sharing power with the opposition. Throughout the past months the High Representative Ashton has been keen to condemn the violence perpetrated by the Egyptian interim government against demonstrators. Regular visits of key Commissioners to Egypt have kept the situation under close observation.

Like in the case of Tunisia, a similar grant of € 100 million was allocated to Egypt in order to improve living conditions in the slums of the Greater Cairo(€ 20 million), promoting economic reform(€20 million) and improving energy supply, investing in renewables and increasing efficiency in the energy sector(€ 60 million).(European Commission,2011b)

In sum, the European Union has become again an important agent of democratization in the region. It is trying to push the energies of actors towards a positive outcome by giving

support to those that want to move towards euromorph structures. In the end, the southern Mediterranean is a huge growing market which may help the EU to overcome its demographic decline in long term perspective. In this sense, the European Union is now regarding the southern Mediterranean as a major priority of its external relations action.

**Conclusions: Democratizing The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership**

In this paper we tried to delineate the repositioning of the EU in relation to the southern Mediterranean. After a first delay in reacting to what was happening in the southern Neighbourhood, the European Union rediscovered its values based on democracy, human rights and rule of law. The EU has been an important agent of democratization in Europe. The southern, central and eastern Europe democratization processes were to a large extent framed by the European Union. In this regard, the EU possesses considerable knowledge in dealing and supporting democratization processes. A socalled ´technology of democratization´has been applied to southern, central and eastern Europe. The Copenhagen criteria applied to central and eastern Europe are a reference for democratic transition process in Europe and elsewhere. In this sense, we come to three preliminary conclusions in this paper:

Firstly, the EU has revamped his previous highly economic agenda in relation to the southern Mediterranean countries, and moved now to a more proactive agenda of democratization. The recent initiatives mentioned by President of the European Commission José Manuel Barroso such as SPRING, the European Endowment of Democracy and increase in mobility between north and south are good examples of it.

Secondly, the southern Mediterranean countries will be extremely thankful to any logistical and economic support that they can get from the European Union. At the moment, the more advanced democratic transitions of Tunisia and Egypt are still in the phase of inconclusive struggles. In the two countries, forthcoming elections will define the configuration forces that will seat in the Constituent Assembly and shape the new constitution. The strategic role of the EU in framing the process towards moderation cannot be emphasised enough. A successful democratic transition may enhance and revitalise the Euro-mediterranean partnership through a new agenda for the Union for the Mediterranean.

Last but not least, the stronger dynamism of the European Union in the southern Mediterranean creates identity problems for the Union for the Mediterranean. There is a need to define what the Union for the Mediterranean is for. The first two years of the UfM were quite negative and characterised by stagnation.
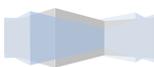
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