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**EXPLORING MEANINGS OF DEMOCRACY TO PROVIDE GUIDELINES FOR POLICY**

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For some time, "Democracy" has been circulating as debased currency in the political marketplace. Politicians with a wide range of convictions and practices tried to attach the label to themselves and their actions. Scholars hesitated to use it, precisely because of the ambiguity in meaning that had grown up around the concept. One of America's most distinguished political theorists, Robert Dahl, gave up and chose to introduce a new term, polyarchy, in its stead in the (vain) hope of gaining greater conceptual precision.

For better or worse, we seem to be "stuck" with democracy as the prominent concept in contemporary political discourse. This is the word that come to people's minds and voices as they struggle for freedom and seek to improve their conditions. This is the word whose connotations we must explore and whose referents we must operationalize, if it is to be of any use in guiding the public policy of the United States.

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The wave of transitions from autocratic rule that began with the "Revolution of the Carnations" in 1974 in Portugal and seems to have crested in 1989 with the collapse of Communist regimes in Eastern Europe has produced a welcome convergence towards a common definition of democracy.<sup>1</sup> Everywhere, there has been a silent and surreptitious dropping of adjectives. Such dubious qualifiers as "popular", "guided", "bourgeois" and "formal" have largely

disappeared from usage. A remarkable agreement has emerged on what are the minimal conditions for determining which polities deserve the prestigious label. Moreover, these standards are being monitored by a number of international organizations and, occasionally, being applied in the making of national foreign policies.<sup>2</sup>

Let us begin with a broad definition of democracy and explore the generic concepts that identify it as a way of organizing the relation between rulers and ruled, and distinguish it from other, non-democratic forms of governance. Then, we will review briefly the procedures, the specific (but still rather abstract) rules and arrangements that must be respected if this generic relation is to assert itself and to persist. Beneath these (hopefully institutionalized) patterns of behavior, it is further possible to discern two operative principles that make democracy work. They are not specified in the generic conditions and they are not openly included among the formal procedures, but without their underlying conditioning effect it is doubtful that the rulers would agree to play by the rules or that the ruled would feel obligated to obey the rulers.

One of the major themes of this essay is that democracy does not consist of a single or unique set of institutions. There are many types of democracy, and it is only by exploring its particular components that we will be able to discern their variety and significance. Moreover, the diverse practices of democracies do

not produce a singular or even necessarily convergent set of effects. Their outcomes are contingent upon a wide range of variable socio-economic conditions, as well as a set of entrenched state structures and policy practices.

First, then, a generic definition of modern political democracy:

**"Modern Political Democracy" is a regime or system of governance in which rulers are held accountable for their actions in the public realm by citizens, acting indirectly through the competition and cooperation of their representatives.<sup>3</sup>**

For the sake of brevity, we will subsequently refer only to "democracy". Before dropping these two qualifiers, however, we should say something about them:

1. Modern: The classical conception of democracy would eliminate the role of representatives and make rulers directly responsible before the assembled citizenry. This heritage survives in the emphasis that some theorists and practitioners place upon individual participation and collective deliberation.

2. Political: Economic or industrial democracy would extend the concept of citizenship from the arena of public institutions where binding decisions are made for the polity as a whole to the realm of production and distribution where owners and managers make decisions about individual firms. This aspiration is reflected in the notion that contemporary regime changes have been confined exclusively to the political realm (except in Eastern Europe and Central America) and should eventually be followed by a "second

transition" that would transform property and production relations.<sup>4</sup>

### I. Generic concepts that define democracy

1. A regime (or system of governance) is an ensemble of patterns that determines (1) the forms and channels of access to principal governmental positions; (2) the characteristics of the actors who are admitted to or excluded from such access; (3) the resources or strategies that these actors can use to gain access; and (4) the rules that are followed in the making of publicly binding decisions. To produce its effect, the ensemble must be institutionalized, i.e. the various patterns must be habitually known, practiced and accepted by most, if not all, of the actors. Increasingly, this has involved their explicit legalization or constitutionalization, but many very stable regime norms can have an implicit, informal, prudential or precedent-regarding basis.<sup>5</sup>

For the sake of economy and comparison, these forms, characteristics, resources and rules are usually "bundled together" and given a generic label. Democratic is one such label used to classify regimes. Autocratic, authoritarian, despotic, dictatorial, tyrannical, totalitarian, absolutist, traditional, monarchic, oligarchic, plutocratic, aristocratic, sultanistic are others.<sup>6</sup> As we shall see, once the generic regime type has been determined, it may be desirable to proceed further and to break up the variation into subtypes.

2. The rulers are those who occupy dominant positions in the formal structure of governance. Democracies are not anarchies. They are not voluntarily or spontaneously coordinated, but depend upon the presence of persons who occupy specialized authority roles and can give legitimate commands to others. As we shall discuss below, what distinguishes democratic rulers from non-democratic ones are the norms that determine how they become rulers and the practices that hold them accountable for what they do once they have become rulers.

Another way of putting this point is that democracies involve not only citizen rights but also citizen obligations--specifically, the general obligation to accept as legitimate and, therefore, to obey commands which have been elaborated according to fair norms and practices -- even when the affected citizens do not agree with them and have not participated in their elaboration.

3. The public realm involves that part of the collective choice process in which norms binding on the society as a whole and backed by the coercive force of the state are made. This realm can vary a great deal across democracies depending upon how previous decisions have drawn distinctions between the public and the private, between state and society, between legitimate coercion and voluntary exchange, between collective needs and individual preferences.

The liberal conception of democracy advocates circumscribing the public realm as narrowly as possible -- along the lines of "he

who governs least, governs best". The socialist or social democratic approach would extend that realm through regulation, subsidization and, in some cases, collective ownership. Neither is intrinsically more democratic than the other -- just differently democratic. This implies that measures aimed at "developing the private sector" are no more democratic than those aimed at "developing the public sector". Both, if carried to the extreme, could undermine the practice of democracy: the former by destroying the basis for satisfying collective needs and exercising legitimate authority; the latter by destroying the basis for satisfying individual preferences and controlling illegitimate government actions. Differences of opinion over the optimal mix of the two provide much of the substantive content of political conflict within established democracies.

4. Citizens provide the most distinctive element in democratic regimes. All types of regime have rulers of some sort and a public realm of some dimension; only democracies have citizens.

Historically, severe restrictions on citizenship were imposed in most (semi-)democracies according to criteria of age, gender, class, race, literacy, tax-paying capacity, etc. Only a small proportion of the total population was eligible to vote or to compete for office. Only restricted social categories were allowed to form, join or support political associations. After protracted struggle -- and in some cases as the result of violent upheavals or as the outcome of international war -- these restrictions were

lifted. In the contemporary period, the criteria for inclusion are fairly standard. All native-born adults are eligible, although somewhat higher age limits may still be imposed to determine eligibility for certain offices. Contemporary discussion about the further extension of citizenship has focused on such issues as lowering the age limit (Brazil recently made 16 year olds eligible to vote), making voting compulsory and/or enfranchising resident foreigners, but these are of marginal importance when compared to the historical struggle. Unlike the early American and European democracies of the 19th Century, none of the recent democracies in Southern Europe, Latin America, Asia and Eastern Europe has even attempted to restrict the franchise or eligibility to candidacy formally.

When it comes to informal restrictions on the effective exercise of citizenship rights, the story can be quite different; hence, the central importance discussed below of procedures.

5. Competition has not always been considered an essential defining condition of democracy. As we noted above, the classical conception presumed decision-making through direct participation and the formation of a collective consensus. The assembled citizenry was expected to agree unanimously (or, at least, overwhelmingly) on a common course of action after listening to the alternatives and deliberating their merits and demerits. This tradition of hostility to "faction", "adversarial action" and "particular interests" persists in democratic thought, but at least

since the Federalist Papers it has become widely accepted that competition among factions is a "necessary evil" of all democracies that operate on a more than local scale. As James Madison put it, two of the possible remedies for "the mischief of faction" are worse than the disease: (1) to remove its causes "by destroying the liberty that is essential to its existence" or (2) "by giving to every citizens the same opinions, the same passions, and the same interests". The best alternative, he argued, was to recognize that "the latent causes of faction are sown into the nature of man" and to attempt to control its effects.<sup>7</sup>

Where there is no effective agreement among democrats, however, is on the forms and the rules of competition. Indeed, it is precisely disagreement over the principles and practices of competition that contributes the most to distinguishing between sub-types of democracy.

**Forms of competition:** The most widely diffused conception of democracy makes it virtually synonymous with the presence of regular, fairly conducted and honestly counted elections of uncertain outcome. At the extreme, the mere presence of elections -- even ones from which specific parties or candidacies are excluded or in which substantial portions of the population cannot freely participate -- is considered a sufficient condition for the existence of democracy. This fallacy has been called "electoralism" or "the faith that merely holding elections will channel political action into peaceful contests among elites and accord public legitimacy to the winners" -- no matter how they are

conducted or what else constrains those who win them.<sup>8</sup> Without denying their centrality for democracy, these contests between candidates are held sporadically and only allow citizens to choose between the highly aggregated alternatives offered by political parties. Often, and especially in early stages of a transition to democracy, these partisan alternatives can come in a bewildering variety.

In between elections, however, individuals can compete to influence public policy through a wide variety of other intermediaries: interest associations, social movements, locality groupings, clientelistic arrangements, and so forth. Modern democracy, in other words, offers a variety of competitive processes and channels for the expression of interests and values -- associational as well as partisan, functional as well as territorial, collective as well as individual. All are integral to its practice.

Rules of competition: Here again, there is a commonly accepted image of democracy that identifies it exclusively with majority rule. Any governing body that makes decisions by combining the votes of more than half of those eligible and present is said to be democratic -- whether that majority emerges within an electorate, a parliament, a committee, a city council or a party caucus. For specific decisions, say, amendment of the constitution or expulsion of a member, the rule is sometimes bent and "qualified majorities" of more than 51% can be required, but few would contest

that democracy must involve some process of assembling the equal preferences of individuals.

The problem, however, arises when numbers meet intensities. What happens when a properly assembled majority (especially, a stable, self-perpetuating majority) produces decisions that regularly and negatively affect some minority (especially, a threatened cultural or ethnic minority). In these circumstances, the actual practice of successful democracy tends to displace one of its central principles and to recognize and protect the rights of minorities. This can be accomplished in many ways: by constitutional provisions placing certain matters beyond the reach of majorities ("Bills of Rights"); by requirements for concurrent majorities in several different constituencies ("Confederalism"); by guarantees for the autonomy of local or regional governments from central authority ("Federalism"); by practices of forming Grand Coalitions incorporating all parties ("Consociationalism"); and by encouraging the negotiation of Social Pacts between business and labor ("Neo-Corporatism").

The most common and effective way of protecting minorities, however, lies in the everyday operation of interest associations and social movements. These reflect (some would say, amplify) the different intensities of preference that exist in the population and bring them to bear on those chosen directly or indirectly according to the majority principle. Another way of putting this intrinsic tension between numbers and intensities would be to say

that "in modern democracies, votes may be counted, but influences also are weighted".

6. Cooperation has always been a central feature of democracies. Actors must combine with each other by some voluntary process to make collective decisions binding on the polity as a whole. Most obviously, they must cooperate in order to compete. They must be capable of engaging in collective action through parties, associations and movements that can select candidates, articulate preferences, petition authorities and influence policies.

But beyond this unavoidably "adversarial" aspect to democracy, its freedoms should encourage citizens to deliberate among themselves, to discover their common needs and to resolve their possible conflicts without relying on centralized political authority. The "classical" conception of democracy stressed these qualities and they are by no means extinct -- despite repeated efforts by contemporary theorists to stress the analogy with behavior in the economic marketplace and to reduce all its operations to competitive interest maximization.<sup>9</sup> Alexis de Tocqueville more than any other modern theorist succeeded in capturing the importance of independent group action for democracy and his Democracy in America remains a major source of inspiration for all who would see in this form of governance something more than a struggle for election (and re-election) among competing candidates.<sup>10</sup>

The "codeword" in present-day political discourse for this concern with cooperation and autonomous group activity is civil society. If the diverse units of social identity and interest can organize themselves independently of the state (and, some would argue, also independently of political parties), then, not only will their competitive interaction place restraints on the arbitrary actions of rulers, but their internal deliberations will alter the behavior of citizens by making them more aware of the preferences of others, more self-confident in their capacity to act and more civic-minded in their willingness to sacrifice for the common good. In its most optimistic versions, the existence of a civil society provides an intermediate layer of governance between the individual and the state -- one that is capable of resolving conflicts before they become the object of public struggle and of controlling the behavior of members without using the instruments of public coercion. Rather than overloading decision-makers with increased demands and, thereby, rendering the system ungovernable,<sup>11</sup> a viable civil society could actually reduce the intensity of conflicts and improve the quality of citizenship -- without relying exclusively on the privatism of the marketplace.

7. The principal agents of modern political democracy are representatives. Citizens may elect them directly and/or choose to support the parties, associations or movements they lead, but representatives do the real work. Moreover, most of these persons are not amateurs but professionals. Without individuals who invest

in democracy to the extent that they orient their life's career around the aspiration to fill its key roles, it is doubtful that any democracy could survive. The central question, therefore, is not whether or not there will be a "political elite" or even a "political class", but how that group of representatives is composed and subsequently held accountable for its actions.

As indicated above, the channels of representation in modern democracy are multiple. The electoral one, based on territorial constituencies (large or small, single or multiple member, first-past-the-post or proportional), is the most visible and public. It culminates in a parliament or a presidency that is periodically accountable to the citizenry as a whole, and that may be ultimately responsible for approving all binding decisions. However, the growth of government -- itself, in large part a byproduct of popular demand -- has increased the variety of agencies charged with making public decisions and the discretionary authority of those making them. Around these agencies, as well as in the lobbies of the legislature, has developed a vast apparatus of specialized representation based largely on functional interests, not territorial constituencies. These associations, and not political parties, have become the primary expression of civil society in most stable democracies --supplemented and occasionally countermanded by the sporadic actions of social movements on the streets and in the courts.

One major implication of this proliferation of groups and modes of political expression is the realization that the recent

and fragile democracies that have sprung up since 1974 must live in "compressed time". They will not have the relatively simple and nationally autonomous civil societies that surrounded the prior (and, often equally fragile) European democracies of the 19th and early 20th century, and they cannot expect to acquire the multiple channels of representation in gradual historical progression as did most of their predecessors. If only by diffusion and imitation, all manner of parties, associations and movements will be simultaneously present during their change in regime -- and all will be seeking to influence political outcomes with their highly diverse opinions, passions and interests.

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Those advocating specific programs aimed at promoting or defending democracy in its most generic sense should be capable of relating them to one or more of the above "key concepts". Each program should contribute in some plausible and significant way to developing institutions at the regime level, improving the capacity of accountable rulers, affirming the distinctive characteristics of the public realm, expanding the rights of the citizenry, ensuring the viability of competitive practices, encouraging cooperative behavior and/or unclogging the multiple channels of representation.

## II. Procedural requisites that make democracy possible

The above defining components of democracy are, unavoidably, abstract. They can give rise to a considerable variety of

institutions and sub-types of democracy. Each of them is sufficiently capacious (and vague) to cover a wide range of programs. For democracy to survive and work effectively, however, a specific set of procedural norms must be followed and civic rights must be respected. A polity that does not impose such restrictions upon itself, that does not follow "the rule of law" with regard to its own procedures, should not be considered democratic. In and by themselves, these procedures do not define democracy, i.e. they do not guarantee the accountability of rulers to the citizenry, but their presence is indispensable to its persistence. They are necessary, but not sufficient conditions for its existence.<sup>12</sup>

Robert Dahl has offered the most generally accepted listing of the "procedural minimal" conditions that must be present for modern political democracy, or, as he would prefer it, polyarchy to exist:

1. Control over government decisions about policy is constitutionally vested in elected officials.
2. Elected officials are chosen in frequent and fairly conducted elections in which coercion is comparatively uncommon.
3. Practically all adults have the right to vote in the election of officials.
4. Practically all adults have the right to run for elective offices in the government...

5. Citizens have a right to express themselves without the danger of severe punishment on political matters broadly defined...

6. Citizens have a right to seek out alternative sources of information. Moreover, alternative sources of information exist and are protected by law.

7. ... Citizens also have the right to form relatively independent associations or organizations, including independent political parties and interest groups.<sup>13</sup>

Elsewhere and earlier, Dahl has offered slightly different listings of these procedural minima,<sup>14</sup> but the above seven seem to capture the essential dimensions for most analysts. We, however, propose to add two others, one of which could be considered a further specification of item (1), and the other which might be called an implicit prior condition to all seven of the above.

8. Popularly elected officials must be able to exercise their constitutionally mandated control over government decisions without being subjected to informal, overriding constraints imposed by non-elected officials. This is intended to cover instances in which high military officers and well-entrenched civil servants or state managers retain the capacity to act autonomously from control by elected civilians and, in the extreme (but, alas, not uncommon) case, to veto the policy actions of accountable officials.<sup>15</sup> Simply stated, democracy requires civilian control over the military. For example, without this additional caveat, the "militarized polities" of contemporary Central America could be classified as political

democracies by many scholars -- just as they have been (with the exception of Sandinista Nicaragua) by U.S. policy-makers. This illustrates well what we have earlier called "electoralism" -- the tendency to focus on the holding of elections without regard for other rights and obligations of citizenship.

9. The polity must be self-governing, i.e. it must possess a minimal capacity to act independently from constraints imposed by some other, overarching, political system. Dahl and other contemporary democratic theorists have probably taken this condition for granted since the units they referred to were unequivocal "nation-states" with formal sovereignty in the international arena. However, with the development of blocs, alliances, spheres of influence and a variety of "neo-colonial" arrangements -- not to mention, the proliferation of mechanisms for "complex interdependence" between polities -- the issue of autonomy has become increasingly salient. Is a system really democratic if its freely and competitively elected officials are unable to make collectively binding decisions that are not vetted and approved by actors outside their territorial domain? This may not seem like such a critical matter if the outsiders are themselves democratically constituted and if the insiders are relatively free to alter or even to end the encompassing arrangement. The situation of Puerto Rico, therefore, is not identical to that of, say, Lithuania -- but they both suffer the stigmata of heteronomy.

### III. Operational Principles that Make Democracy Feasible

These component processes and procedural norms help us to identify what democracy is, but they do not tell us much about how it actually functions. The simplest answer is "by the consent of the people"; the more complex one is "by the contingent consent of politicians acting under conditions of bounded uncertainty".

1. Contingent consent: In a democracy, representatives agree to compete in such a way that (1) those who win greater electoral support or those who gain greater influence over policy will not use their (temporary) political superiority to impede those who have lost from taking office or exerting influence in the future; and (2) those who have lost in the present will respect the right of the winners to make binding decisions, in exchange for being allowed to take office or influence decisions in the future. In their turn, citizens are expected to obey the decisions ensuing from such a process of competition, provided its outcome remains contingent upon their collective preferences as expressed through fair and regular elections or open and repeated negotiations in the future.

The challenge is to find a set of rules that embody contingent consent, not a set of goals that command widespread consensus. This "democratic bargain", to use Robert Dahl's expression,<sup>16</sup> varies a good deal from society to society. It depends on cleavage patterns and such subjective factors as the degree of mutual trust, the standard of fairness, and the willingness to compromise. It

may even be compatible with a great deal of dissensus on substantive policy issues.

2. Bounded Uncertainty: All democracies involve some degree of uncertainty -- about who will be elected and what policies they will pursue. Even in those polities where one party persists in winning elections or one policy is consistently implemented, the possibility that they could be reversed by independent collective action still exists, vide Italy, Japan and the Scandinavian social democracies. If not, the system is not democratic, vide Mexico (until recently), Senegal or Indonesia.

But the uncertainty embedded in the core of all democracies is bounded. Not just any actor can get into the competition and raise any issue he or she pleases -- there are previously established rules that must be respected. Not just any policy can be decided and implemented -- there are contingencies that must be respected. What the emergent practice of democracy does is to institutionalize "normal" uncertainty with regard to actors and policies. These boundaries vary from country to country. Constitutional guarantees of property, privacy, decent treatment, self-expression, personal movement and "the pursuit of happiness" are part of the effort. But the most effective boundaries are generated by the processes of competition between interests and cooperation within civil society. Whatever the rhetoric -- and some polities appear to offer their citizenries more dramatic alternatives than others -- once the rule of contingent consent

have been agreed upon, the actual variation is likely to stay within a predictable and mutually acceptable range.

These operative principles of democracy are much too abstract to be used as standards for evaluating specific programs. Nevertheless, we thought it desirable to include some discussion of them -- if only because their underlying importance might otherwise pass unnoticed since they lie, at best, implicitly behind the generic concepts and formal procedures we have discussed above. Once they have been revealed, it may even be possible to contribute (usually by indirect means) to their realization.

Of greater potential significance may be the explicit contrast that they establish with one of the most persistent (and, we believe, misleading) themes in the literature on democracy--namely, the emphasis upon "civic culture". The principles we have suggested here rest on rules of prudence, not on deeply ingrained norms of mutual tolerance, moderation in demands, respect for one's opponent, sense of fair play, propensity to compromise, confidence in public authorities, etc. Waiting for these norms to develop and, then, to be successfully transmitted through socialization to subsequent generations implies a very slow process of regime consolidation and would probably condemn most contemporary experiences ex hypothesi to failure. Our assertion is that something like a modus vivendi of contingent consent and bounded uncertainty can emerge from interaction between antagonistic and mutually suspicious actors and that the far more benevolent and

ingrained norms of a civic culture are better thought of as the product not the producer of democracy.

#### IV. Enabling conditions that make democracy likely

On this subject, the scholarly debate has been extensive--and, ultimately, inconclusive. At one time in the 1960s, it was believed that a specific number of economic, social and cultural "prerequisites for stable democracy" had been identified, but, first, the subsequent wave of authoritarian regimes and, now, the proliferation of transitions away from them have called into question such an assumption.

First, a certain accumulation of wealth or, better said, level of per capita economic development was considered a prerequisite to democracy. Market economies in themselves were not enough; a country had to cross (and remain beyond) a minimum threshold of economic performance before political competition could be institutionalized. "The more well-to-do a nation," Seymour Martin Lipset claimed, "the greater the chances that it will sustain democracy."<sup>17</sup> A wealthy economy made possible higher levels of literacy, education, urbanization and mass media exposure, or so the logic went, while also providing resources to mitigate the tensions produced by political conflict.<sup>18</sup>

A second set of preconditions that underlay traditional approaches to democracy was derived from the concept of political culture, that is, the system of beliefs and values in which political action is embedded and given meaning. The prevalence of

certain values and beliefs over others was said to be more conducive to the emergence of democracy. Thus, for example, Protestantism allegedly enhanced the prospects for democracy in Northern Europe while Catholicism, with its tradition of hierarchy and intolerance, was posited to have the opposite effect in Southern Europe and Latin America.<sup>19</sup> Although arguments based only on the link between different religious systems and experiences with democracy have been dismissed by most scholars, more sophisticated claims sought to identify political cultures characterized by a high degree of mutual trust among members of society, a willingness to tolerate diversity and a tradition of accommodation or compromise because such cultures were considered necessary to the subsequent development of democratic institutions. That a "civic culture" of this sort necessarily rested on a widely differentiated and articulated social structure with relatively autonomous social classes, occupational sectors and ethnic, religious or regional groups was an unspoken assumption. In other words, a pro-democratic consensus and set of values was considered the main prerequisite to political democracy.<sup>20</sup>

Third, specific domestic historical conditions and configurations were said to be prerequisites for democracy. Theorists of "crises and sequences" argued that the order in which various crises of modernization appeared and were settled determined whether economic and social transformations were conducive to the development of democracy. Democratic regimes were more likely to emerge if problems of national identity were

resolved prior to the establishment of a central government and if both of these events preceded the formation of mass parties.<sup>21</sup> In a different, yet still historically-grounded vein, Barrington Moore Jr. contended that democracies were more likely to appear where the social and economic power of the landed aristocracy was in decline relative to that of the bourgeoisie and where labor-repressive agriculture was not the dominant mode of production. When this occurred as a result of the commercialization of agriculture that transformed a traditional peasantry into either a class of small farmers or a rural proletariat, the prognosis for democracy was strong indeed.<sup>22</sup> A version of Moore's approach has been used to explain the different political trajectories in Central America. Specifically, democracy is said to have emerged in Costa Rica due to the creation of a yeoman farmer class, while the persistence of authoritarian rule in Guatemala and El Salvador is attributed to the continued dominance of the landed aristocracy.<sup>23</sup>

Finally, some scholars treated external influences as another set of preconditions on the grounds that these could be decisive for determining whether a polity became democratic or authoritarian. Dependency theorists in Latin America and the United States contended that the continent's particular insertion into the international market made democratization especially problematic at more advanced stages of import-substituting capitalist development and even enhanced the necessity for authoritarian rule under specific circumstances. In a logic that ran counter to Lipset's "optimistic equation," both Guillermo

O'Donnell and Fernando Henrique Cardoso argued that as dependent economies became more complex, more penetrated by foreign capital and technology and more reliant upon low wages to maintain their competitive advantage in the international economy, professional militaries, technocrats and state managers moved to the forefront of the decision-making process, forcibly replacing unruly, "populist" parties and trade unions in order to establish a supposedly more efficient form of rule.<sup>24</sup>

Inversely, using an argument based on external influences of a qualitatively different sort, proponents of an aggressive U.S. foreign policy declared that the rise and decline of democracy was directly related to the rise and decline of the global power of the United States rather than to market mechanisms or accumulation processes. In Samuel Huntington's view, the dramatic increase in authoritarian rule during the 1960s and 1970s was a direct reflection of the waning of U.S. influence. Specifically, it was due to the decreased effectiveness of efforts by U.S. officials to promote democracy as a successful model of development. Concomitantly, he argued, the spate of democratic transitions in the 1980s could be credited to the Reagan administration's renewed effort to "restore American power" through the rollback of revolutions and the promotion of electoral reforms. This position, so ideologically convenient for policy-makers, tended to locate the roots of democracy outside Latin America.<sup>25</sup>

The experiences with regime transition in Southern Europe and Latin America since the mid-1970s have challenged virtually all of these presumptions about preconditions. The hypothetical association between wealth and democracy might be called upon to "explain" the timing of the transition to democracy in Spain, Taiwan, South Korea or Brazil after a protracted economic boom, but it could hardly account for the cases of Portugal, Peru or Bolivia, whose transitions were preceded by stagnant growth rates, rising foreign indebtedness, persistent balance of payments problems and a regressive distribution of income. Nothing seems to explain the anomaly of Argentina, where relatively high levels of per capita GDP, literacy, urbanization, etc. have been accompanied by authoritarian rule. If the political cultures of Portugal, Spain, Argentina, Uruguay and Brazil all tolerated, admittedly to varying degrees, the widespread practice of state repression and violation of human rights, how could they suddenly become sufficiently "civic" and "tolerant" to support a democratic outcome? As the Catholic Church took an increasingly active role in opposing authoritarian rule, especially in South and Central America, the argument about the so-called "anti-democratic bias" of Catholicism became increasingly implausible.<sup>26</sup>

Approaches emphasizing the influence of the international system have fared little better. While the manner of a country's insertion into the world capitalist economy is now considered essential for explaining its subsequent political and economic development, as dependency theorists claimed, criticisms of other

scholars plus the democratic transitions in Spain, Brazil, Korea, Taiwan and Chile demonstrated that there was no direct or inevitable correlation between capital deepening and authoritarian rule.<sup>27</sup> The general trends towards recession in export earnings, debt crises, diminishing U.S. support for human rights and the frequent resort to military instruments under the foreign policy of the Reagan administration boded ill for the emergence of democracies in the 1980s, yet emerge they did. The pattern of their appearance presented an undeniable challenge to Huntington's thesis linking democratization with the rise of U.S. power. In Southern Europe, it was the proximity and linkages to Europe, not the United States, that made such a difference to the outcome. In the Southern Cone of Latin America, where influence from the North is not especially high, military rulers generally made way for civilian authority. In Central America, Panama and Haiti, where the overriding historical role of the U.S. is indisputable, militaries either permitted elections to occur without limiting their own prerogatives, or they refused to leave power altogether. Indeed, where the decline in U.S. hegemony was greatest, democracy seemed to appear -- precisely, when dictatorship "should" have been the more appropriate response according to the theory!

These anomalies suggest a pressing need for important revisions, even reversals, in thinking about the conditions that make democracy likely.

First, there may be no single precondition that is necessary for the emergence of a democratic polity, and there surely is no

single precondition that is sufficient to produce such an outcome. The search for causes rooted in economic, social, cultural/psychological or international factors has not yielded a general law of democratization, nor is it likely to do so in the near future despite the proliferation of new cases.<sup>28</sup> Thus, the assumption that some set of identical conditions can account for the presence or absence of democracy should be abandoned. It should be replaced by a greater sensitivity to the considerable variety of contexts that have been associated with successful democratization in the past and can be expected to support it in the present and future.

This should not be interpreted to imply that the advent of democracy in a given country is random, or indifferent to the conditions discussed above. Quite the contrary! The fact that no single condition can be regarded as a prerequisite or that no standard bundle of conditions can be assembled that will guarantee the persistence of democracy means that actors who would promote a democratic outcome can be assured that their level of development, their religious or secular belief system, their national identity, their social structure or their external context does not condemn them, a priori, to failure. All of these can be expected to affect the outcome, but in combinations and permutations that have to be worked out for the country or region in question.

Second, what the literature has considered in the past to be the preconditions for democracy may be better conceived in the

future as the outcomes of democracy. Patterns of greater economic growth and more equitable income distribution, higher levels of literacy and education, increases in social communication and media exposure may be better treated as the products of stable democratic processes, rather than as the prerequisites for its existence. A "civic" political culture characterized by high levels of mutual trust, a willingness to tolerate diversity of opinion and a propensity for accommodation and compromise could be the result of the protracted functioning of democratic institutions that generate appropriate values and beliefs rather than a set of cultural obstacles that must be initially overcome. There is evidence for this contention in the fact that most democracies in Europe and Latin America's oldest democracy in Costa Rica have emerged from quite "uncivic" warfare. In other words, what have been emphasized as independent variables in the past might be more fruitfully conceived as dependent variables in the future.

Third, capitalism, high levels of economic development and the persistence of democracy are empirically correlated, but only over the long run. Admittedly, there have been periods when more developed capitalist countries reverted to authoritarian, even totalitarian, rule (e.g. National Socialist Germany and Fascist Italy) and, even when they did not revert, they still could have trouble sustaining democratic accountability (e.g. the French Fourth Republic and the coup that brought De Gaulle to power in 1958). There have also been some relatively poor countries with highly regulated, statist economies that have managed to sustain

representative and competitive politics over a long period of time (e.g. India and Costa Rica). But these exceptions merely prove (test) the rule, they do not invalidate it.

It should be stressed, however, that the regularity of empirical covariance between development and democracy at any point of time does not demonstrate either the direction of causality or its temporal stability. From a policy perspective, the key problem arises from their short- and even medium-term relationship. For example, it is definitely not the case that rapid growth will produce rapid democratization. Rather the contrary may be the case since high rates of GNP increase, especially unprecedentedly high rates, can have a strong destabilizing impact upon those intermediary institutions that are so crucial for the viability of democracy. Another "unwelcome" feature of economic development is its potentially uneven impact upon socio-economic classes and cultural groups. When such concentrations of benefit become manifest, conflicts between interest associations are likely to intensify and voters in competitive elections may reject the leadership of those who have been so successful in producing additional inequity. In other words, democracy is not neutral with regard to economic development. Eventually, its freedoms can support and even encourage a more open, competitive and productive economy. In the meantime, however, its procedures and principles are very likely to produce compromises and regulations that interfere with market forces. This often means a lower rate of growth and a distribution of benefits that may be economically sub-

optimal, but more politically justifiable in terms of citizen expectations about fairness and equality.

#### V. Components that make for different types of democracy

Several concepts have been deliberately excluded from the initial, generic definition, despite the fact that they have been frequently associated in both everyday practice and scholarly work with democracy. They are, nevertheless, especially important when it comes to distinguishing between sub-types of democracy. As we have suggested above, no single set of actual institutions, practices or values embodies democracy. Polities that reject authoritarian rule and begin a regime transition move, not toward democracy, but towards democracies. They mix different components to produce (eventually) different democracies. The important thing is to recognize that these form a nominal, not an ordinal, scale. They do not specify a clear progression of stages along a single continuum of rising levels of democratic performance, but a matrix of different combinations -- all of which are democratic, but differently so.

1. Consensus: All citizens may not agree on the substantive goals of political action or on the role of the state -- although if they did, it would certainly make governing democracy easier.

2. Participation: All citizens may not take an active and equal part in politics -- although it must be formally and legally

possible for them to do so and it might be desirable if they did so.

3. Access: Rulers may not weigh equally the preferences of all who come before them -- although citizenship implies that individuals and groups should have an equal opportunity to express their preferences, if they so choose.

4. Responsiveness: Rulers may not always follow the course of action preferred by the citizenry -- although where they deviate from such a policy, say on grounds of "reason of state" or "overriding national interest", they must be held ultimately accountable through processes of representation.

5. Majority-rule: Positions may not be allocated or rules may not be decided simply on the basis of assembling more votes than for alternative candidates or proposals -- although derogations from this principle usually must be explicitly defended and previously approved, e.g. in the name of the protection of minority rights.

6. Parliamentary sovereignty: The legislature may not be the only body that can make rules or even the one that must have final authority in deciding what is binding on the public as a whole-- although where executive, judiciary or other public bodies do make that ultimate choice, they too must be capable of being held accountable for their actions.

7. Party government: Rulers may not be nominated, promoted and disciplined in their activities by well organized and programmatically coherent political parties -- although where they

are not, it may prove more difficult to form an effective government and even more difficult to carry out intended policies.

8. Pluralism: The political process may not be based on a multiplicity of overlapping, voluntaristic, and autonomous private groups -- although where there are monopolies of representation, hierarchies of association and obligatory memberships, it is likely that the interests involved will be more closely linked to the state and the separation between the public and private spheres of action will be much less distinct.

9. Federalism: The territorial division of authority may not involve multiple levels and local autonomies, least of all, ones enshrined in a constitutional document -- although some dispersion of power across units, territorial and/or functional, is characteristic of all democracies.

10. Presidentialism: The chief executive officer may not be a single person and he or she may not be directly elected by the citizenry as a whole -- although some concentration of the authority to act for the polity as a whole is present in all democracies, even if it is exercised collectively and only held indirectly accountable to the electorate.

11. Checks and Balances: It is not necessary that the different branches of government be systematically pitted against each other and that only decisions that meet with their concurrent approval can be implemented -- although, again, governments by assembly, by executive concentration, by judicial command, or even

by dictatorial fiat (as in time of war) must be ultimately accountable to the citizenry as a whole.

\* \* \*

All of the above have been considered -- by one theorist or another, or in the practice of one country or another -- essential components of democracy. Instead, they should be recognized either as valuable indicators for delimiting one or another type of democracy, or as useful standards for evaluating the performance of one particular regime or another.

To include them as part of the generic definition of democracy itself would run the risk of "Americo-centrism", i.e. of mistaking the American pattern of government for the universal model for democratic governance. Whenever a policy-maker bases his/her case for the democratic impact of some program upon any of the above criteria: consensus, participation, access, responsiveness, majority rule, parliamentary sovereignty, party government, pluralism, federalism, presidentialism or checks-and-balances, it should be recognized that what is being advocated is not democracy per se, but a particular type of democracy. There is no intrinsic reason why American democratic institutions should be universally preferable -- even from the point of view of American foreign policy interests. Indeed, there are some very good reasons for suspecting that the parliamentary, consociational, unitary, corporatist and concentrated arrangements of continental Europe may have some virtues in guiding politics through the difficult and uncertain period of the transition from autocratic rule.<sup>29</sup>

## VI. Contingent effects that may not be produced by democracy

We have attempted to convey the generic meaning of modern political democracy, without identifying it exclusively with some particular set of rules and institutions, and without confining it to some specific culture or level of development. We have stressed its accomplishments, but have not said much about what democracy may not be capable of producing.

There is a real (and quite understandable) temptation to load too many expectations on this concept and to imagine that --just by attaining the exalted status of democracy -- all political, social, economic, administrative and cultural problems will be resolved. Unfortunately, "all good things do not go together".

We conclude, therefore, with some brief remarks about what not to expect from the attainment of democracy:

1. Democracies are not necessarily more economically efficient. Their rates of aggregate growth, savings and investment may be no better than those of non-democracies. This is especially likely during the transition, when propertied groups and/or administrative elites may respond to imagined, as well as real, threats to the "rights" they enjoyed under authoritarian rule by engaging in capital flight, disinvestment, sabotage, etc. With the persistence of democracy, benevolent long-term effects upon income distribution, aggregate demand, popular education, worker productivity and individual creativity may materialize to improve economic and, especially, social performance, but it is certainly

too much to expect that these improvements will be immediately forthcoming -- much less that they will be a defining characteristic of democratization.

2. Nor are democracies necessarily more administratively efficient. Their capacity to take decisions may even be slower than the regimes they replace, if only because more actors must be consulted. The costs involved in reaching a given objective may be higher, if only because pay-offs in patronage and exemptions have to be made to a wider and more resourceful set of clients-- although one should never underestimate the capacity of autocracies for outright corruption within their ranks. The level of popular satisfaction with policy performance may not even seem greater, if only because the required compromises often result in outcomes that are not especially beloved by anyone, and because the losers are free to complain about how they have been treated!

3. Democracies are not likely to appear more orderly, consensual, stable or governable than the autocracies they replace. Partly, this is for the reason mentioned above -- freedom for the expression of conflicting interests -- but it is also a reflection of the likelihood of continuing disagreement over the newly emergent rules and institutions. These products of imposition or compromise are often initially quite ambiguous in nature and uncertain in effect, at least, until actors have learned how to use and manipulate them. What is more, they come in the aftermath of

serious struggles and high ideals. Groups and individuals with their recently acquired autonomy are going to test specific rules, protest against the performance of particular institutions, and insist on renegotiating their part of the arrangement. Therefore, the presence of "anti-system parties" should hardly be surprising -- nor should they be taken as proof of a failure at democratic consolidation. What counts is less their program or rhetoric than whether they are willing, however reluctantly, to play according to the general rules of bounded uncertainty and contingent consent.

"Governability" is a (relative) characteristic of all types of regimes, not an exclusive property of democracy. Given the policy exhaustion and popular discredit which have befallen all types of autocracy -- from sultanistic Paraguay to totalitarian Albania -- it may seem that only democracies (of whatever type) can be expected to govern effectively and consensually in the contemporary period. Reassuring as this may be, the effect could only be temporary. Past experience demonstrates that democracies can lose their capacity for governance. Mass publics can become "disenchanted" with their performance. More threatening, however, is the temptation for ruling elites to fiddle the procedures and, ultimately, to undermine the principles of contingent consent and bounded uncertainty.

4. Democracies may be relatively more open societies and definitely more open polities than the autocracies they replace, but they are not necessarily more open economies. Many of today's

most successful and well-established democracies have resorted historically to protectionism against foreign trade, have closed their borders to outsiders and have relied extensively upon public institutions for developmental purposes. The long-term compatibility between democracy and capitalism is not in doubt-- despite the continuous tension between the two. What is problematic are the short-term policy trade-offs involved. For example, it is not clear whether the promotion of such liberal economic goals as the right of individuals to own property and retain profits, the clearing function of markets, the private settlement of disputes, the freedom to produce without government regulation or the privatization of what were public enterprises will also and everywhere contribute to the consolidation of democracy. After all, democracies do need to levy taxes and they must regulate the impact of certain market distributions, especially where private monopolies and oligopolies exist. Citizens or, better, their principal agents, the representatives, may decide that it is desirable to protect the rights of collectivities from encroachment by individuals, especially propertied ones, and they may choose to set aside certain forms of property for public or cooperative ownership. In short, economic liberty is not synonymous with political freedom -- and may even impede it.

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So, let us not presume that democratization will necessarily bring in its wake economic growth, social peace, administrative efficiency, political conformity, free markets, "the end of ideology", and, least of all, "the end of history". No doubt, having some of these qualities would make the consolidation of democracy easier, but they are neither prerequisites for it, nor are they immediate products of it. What we should be looking and hoping for is the emergence of an ensemble of political institutions that can compete with each other in forming governments and influencing public policy, that can channel social and economic conflicts through regular procedures, and that have sufficient linkage to civil society to represent their members/voters and commit them to collective courses of action. The "Democratic Wager" is that such a regime, once established, will not only persist by reproducing itself within its initial "confining conditions", but will eventually expand beyond them.<sup>30</sup> Alone among regime types, democracies have the generic capacity to modify consensually their rules and institutions in response to changing circumstances. They may not immediately produce all those desirable public and private goods mentioned above, but they do stand a better chance of doing so eventually than do autocracies.

## VII. External policies that may promote democracy

The current wave of regime changes -- one of several - which have occurred historically -- does not guarantee either the

demise of remaining autocracies or the persistence of new democracies. Indeed, as the previous waves that began in 1848, 1919 and 1945 testify, the flow toward democracy can be soon replaced with an ebb back to autocracy. Democracy is neither inevitable for ethical reasons, nor even necessary for developmental purposes. It is, however, both desirable and possible in the contemporary era.

Generically speaking, there are four possible outcomes of the thirty or so cases of regime change toward democracy that have occurred since 1974:

1. Regression to autocracy. Based strictly on past experience, this would have to be judged the most probable.
2. Stabilization short of democracy. Authoritarian rulers may seek to liberalize their practices without rendering themselves accountable to the citizenry (a dictablanda in our jargon) or oligarchs may attempt to restrict the definition of citizen rights and/or the access to candidacy by particular groups (a democradura in our jargon).
3. Persistence of unconsolidated democracy. The inheritors of the ancien regime may agree that no regime other than democracy is capable of legitimate governance, but be incapable of agreeing on specific rules of contingent consent and bounded uncertainty that would allow themselves to compete and cooperate effectively.
4. Consolidation of one of various types of democracy. The "democrats" who come to power may agree massively on the

desirability of democracy, remain divided over which forms and rules are preferable, but still be capable of reaching a compromise that will provide the basis for some type of democracy -- often not the one that any of them initially preferred.

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The goal of AID's Democratic Initiative should be to promote the fourth outcome, the consolidation of democracy, even if this results in a type of democracy that is quite different from our own. Not only is this in the interest of the people of these countries, but it is also more likely to be in accord with the national interest of the United States. This is true, despite the fact, that nascent democracies may pursue specific policy objectives that clash with those of the United States. In the long run, however, democracies are more reliable, more law-abiding and more peaceful "citizens" of the world political system.

Scholars tend to be skeptical whether external influences, in general, and U.S. policy initiatives, in particular, can have much of a lasting impact. There is relative agreement that foreign powers have not contributed much to the timing of regime change or to the course of the transition itself -- except in those cases in which defeat in war and occupation by victorious outsiders provides the driving force behind the process. Transitions are moments and periods of high uncertainty in which actors make choices rapidly on insufficient information with inadequate understanding of their probable consequences. Unless foreigners are directly present,

well-informed about local realities, and capable of offering substantial incentives on very quick notice, they are not likely to have much impact during such periods of high uncertainty.

During the subsequent consolidation phase -- once a "founding election" has taken place and the legislative process is functioning to deliberate and produce reform measures -- one can more easily imagine a significant role for outside actors, provided they are not too exclusively linked to the defunct autocracy or to some losing faction during the transition. The domestic actors are beginning "to settle into the trenches" of electoral competition and policy influence. They know better what their interests are, who their allies and opponents may be, and how to play the game. Whether in power or out, they should be more amenable to the suggestions and incentives offered by foreigners; indeed, they may even be dependent upon external sources of inspiration and support for drafting needed reforms and implementing those that are chosen. Moreover, this period between transition and consolidation is likely to be the most critical for the democratization process. Many actors are bound to find their (inflated) expectations frustrated; some will discover that the new rules of competition do not favor them; a few may even begin to feel that their vital interests are threatened by newly empowered, popular majorities. This can lead to a strong temptation to fiddle with the new, weakly established boundaries of uncertainty and rules of consent between government and opposition.

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One major implication of the above discussion is that the goals of AID are not necessarily complementary and are likely to involve some difficult and costly tradeoffs, at least in the short to medium run. Economic growth, environmental sustainability, poverty alleviation and political democracy cannot all be attained through the same policy measures. Least of all are they likely to be compatible with ensuring on-going support for United States political, economic and security interests. Priorities have to be established and it is not at all clear that the promotion of democratic consolidation through AID programs should be emphasized over more traditional goals -- if only because external agents may not be able to contribute much when domestic elites are unwilling or incapable of striking (and holding to) a democratic bargain on their own.

Perhaps, something could be learned from what so far has been the most successful effort at promoting democracy through external means. We are referring to the impact of the policy of the European Community (and the Council of Europe) that offers membership to all European states, but denies it to those that are not democratic. The prospect of entering the EC played a significant role, not so much in bringing about regime transition in Greece, Portugal and Spain, as in helping all three countries to move (admittedly, at different paces) toward the consolidation of a type of democracy, well within the European range of variance.

- The EC policy seems to have worked well for five reasons:

1. It was collectively (and unanimously) decided whether a given "candidate" was democratic and no room was left for discretionary actions by individual countries to trade this status off against other possible rewards.

2. It offered multi-layered benefits to those countries that qualified, ranging from trade opportunities, investment possibilities, currency stabilization, regional development funds, tax advantages, etc.

3. It locked beneficiaries into a permanent organizational network that operated in a variety of domains and could be expected to expand in the future in ways that would further insure their democratic status.

4. It was backed up by a multitude of private transnational institutions based on parties, interest associations and social movements in member countries that both preceded and followed upon the EC's decision.

5. It avoided any attempt (such as the present one) at defining democracy formally. Instead, it relied heavily on consultation and deliberation among representatives of member states to build up a set of precedents to guide decisions on specific cases.

Unfortunately, it is difficult to imagine any other region of the world where this combination of institutional linkages and policy incentives are present or could be assembled within the near future. Even extending the methods of the EC to influence the consolidation of democracy in Eastern Europe seems to be running

up against difficulties of another order of magnitude. As the United States faces the daunting prospect of responding to the unprecedented wave of democratization that has swept across the world, it may learn something from the success of the Northern-Southern European experience, but it will have to invent new combinations to cope with a much wider diversity of national and regional contexts.

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FINIS

★ ENDNOTES ★

1. For a comparative analysis of the recent regime changes in Southern Europe and Latin America, see Guillermo O'Donnell, Philippe C. Schmitter and Laurence Whitehead (eds.), Transitions from Authoritarian Rule, 4 vols. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986). For an attempt to compare these transitions with subsequent ones in Central America and Eastern Europe, see Terry Karl and Philippe C. Schmitter, "Modes of Transition in South and Central America, Southern and Eastern Europe", International Social Science Journal, No. 129 (1991), forthcoming; and Philippe C. Schmitter and Terry Karl, "What Kinds of Democracy are Emerging in South and Central America and Southern and Eastern Europe?", paper presented at the Coloquio Internacional sobre Transiciones a la Democracia en Europa y America Latina, Universidad de Guadalajara y FLACSO-Mexico, 21-25 de enero de 1991, Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico.

For another, very useful, compilation that adopts a more "structural" as opposed to "actor-centered" approach and covers a wider number of cases (in Africa and Asia, as well as Latin America), see Larry Diamond, Juan Linz and Seymour Martin Lipset (eds.), Democracy in Developing Countries, vols. 2,3,4 (Boulder, CO.: Lynne Rienner, 1989).

2. Numerous attempts have been made to codify and quantify the existence of democracy across political systems. The best known is probably Raymond D. Gastil, Freedom in the World: Political Rights and Civil Liberties, existent since 1973, previously published by Greenwood Press and, most recently, by University Press of America, 1988). Also see Charles Humana, World Human Rights Guide (New York: Facts on File, 1986) and United States Government, Department of State, Country Reports on Human Rights Practices (Washington, D.C.: GPO, various dates). As the titles imply, these do not -- strictly speaking -- focus on democracy and its processes, but on its procedural requisites.

3. The definition most commonly used by American social scientists is that of Joseph Schumpeter: "that institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for the people's vote". Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1943), p. 269. We accept certain aspects of this classic "elitist" or "procedural" approach to modern democracy, but differ primarily in our emphasis on the accountability of rulers to citizens and the relevance of mechanisms of competition other than elections.

4. In the West, only the Portuguese Revolution of 1974 attempted to bring about a simultaneous transformation in political and socioeconomic structures. This lasted only about a year and a half. Since then, much of that country's political evolution has been devoted to removing the effects of trying to implant economic democracy.

In Eastern Europe, simultaneous transformations have been the norm, not the exception, but they have moved in directions opposite to economic or industrial democracy: away from collective ownership, state planning and social equality towards privatization, market mechanisms and increased disparities in individual effort and return.

5. Not only do some countries practice a stable form of democracy without a formal constitution (e.g. Great Britain and Israel), but even more countries have constitutions and legal codes that offer no guarantee of reliable practice. On paper, Stalin's 1936 constitution for the USSR was a virtual model of democratic rights and entitlements.

6. For the most valiant attempt to make some sense out of this thicket of distinctions, see Juan Linz, "Totalitarian, Authoritarian Regimes" in Handbook of Political Science, eds. Fred I. Greenstein and Nelson W. Polsby (Reading, Mass.: Addison Wesley, 1975), pp. 175-411.

7. "Publius" (Alexander Hamilton, John Jay and James Madison), The Federalist Papers, originally published in 1788. The quote is from Number 10.

8. See Terry Karl, "Imposing Consent? Electoralism versus Democratization in El Salvador", in Paul Drake and Eduardo Silva (eds.), Elections and Democratization in Latin America, 1980-1985 (San Diego: Center for Iberian and Latin American Studies, Center for US-Mexican Studies, University of California, San Diego, 1986), pp. 9-36.

9. See Jane Mansbridge, Beyond Adversarial Democracy (New York: Basic Books, 1980).

10. Alexis de Tocqueville, Democracy in America, 2 vols., first published in French in 1835-40 and in English in 1835-40.

11. This fear of overloaded government and the imminent collapse of democracy is well reflected in the work of Samuel P. Huntington during the 1970s. See, especially, Michel Crozier, Samuel P. Huntington and Joji Watanuki, The Crisis of Democracy (New York: New York University Press, 1975). For Huntington's (revised) thoughts about the prospects for democracy, see his "Will More Countries Become Democratic?", Political Science Quarterly, 99 (2), pp. 193-218.

12. It is common that theorists will merge elements of process and procedure in defining democracy. For example, one of the authors of this essay in a recently published article proposed the following definition: "[Democracy is] a set of institutions that permits the entire adult population to act as citizens by choosing their leading decision-makers in competitive, fair and regularly scheduled which are held in the context of the rule of law, guarantees for political freedom and limited military prerogatives". Terry L. Karl, "Dilemmas of Democratization in Latin America", Comparative Politics (October 1990), pp. 1-21.

13. Robert Dahl, Dilemmas of Pluralist Democracy (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982), p. 11.

14. Especially in his Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1971), p. 3 where "the right of political leaders to compete for support and votes" and "institutions for making government policies depend on votes and other expressions for preference" are included. See also John D. May, "Defining Democracy: A Bid for Coherence and Consensus", Political Studies 26, 1 (1978), pp. 1-14.

15. For an excellent discussion of the variety of ways in which military establishments have managed to hang on to power in Latin America despite regime change from autocracy to democracy, see Felipe Aguero, "The Military and the Limits to Democratization in South America", unpublished MS, no date. Also, Alfred Stepan, Rethinking Military Politics (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987).

16. After the Revolution: Authority in a Good Society (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970).

17. This formulation originally appeared in Lipset's classic essay, "Some Social Requisites of Democracy: Economic Development and Political Legitimacy," American Political Science Review, Vol. 53, No. 1 (March 1959).

18. Some proponents of this view often measured the prospects for democracy by per capita gross domestic product, leading the occasional political observer to await the moment when a particular country would cross "the threshold" into democracy. This supposed threshold has varied from country to country. Spain's Lopez Rodo once predicted that his country would not become democratic until it reached a per capita income of \$1,000. More recently, Mitchell Seligson has argued that Central America needs to approach a per capita income of \$250 (in 1957 dollars) and a literacy rate of over 50 percent as a necessary precondition for democratization. See James M. Malloy and Mitchell A. Seligson (eds.) Authoritarians and Democrats: Regime Transition in Latin America (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1987), pp. 7-9.

19. For example, Howard Wiarda, in his "Toward a Framework for the Study of Political Change in the Iberic-Latin Tradition: The Corporative Model", Corporatism and National Development in Latin America (Boulder: Westview, 1981) argued that Latin America possessed "a political culture and a sociopolitical order that at its core is essentially two-class, authoritarian, traditional, elitist, patrimonial, Catholic, stratified, hierarchical and corporate." A similar argument can be found in Richard N. Morse, "The Heritage of Latin America" in Howard Wiarda (ed.), Politics and Social Change in Latin America (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1974).

20. The notion of "civic culture," first introduced by Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba in The Civic Culture (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963), sought to analyze the relationship between the political attitudes of mass publics and the nature of their political system. Its conclusions have been recently re-evaluated in Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba (eds.), The Civic Culture Revisited (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1980).

21. This was the basic argument put forward by Leonard Binder et al. (eds.), Crisis and Sequences in Political Development (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971) and by Eric Nordlinger, "Political Development, Time Sequences and Rates of Change," in Jason L. Finkle and Robert W. Gable (eds.), Political Development and Social Change, 2nd edition (New York: John Wiley, 1971).

22. See Barrington Moore Jr., Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy (Boston: Beacon Press, 1966).

23. See John Weeks, "An Interpretation of the Central American Past," Latin American Research Review, Vol. 21, No. 3 (1986); Enrique Baloyra-Herp, "Reactionary Despotism in Central America," Journal of Latin American Studies, Vol. 15, No. 2 (1983); and Jeffrey Paige, "Coffee and Politics in Central America" in Richard Tardanico (ed.), Crisis in the Caribbean Basin (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1987).

In a more recent work, "The Social Origins of Dictatorship, Democracy and Socialist Revolution in Central America," Paige seeks to differentiate his argument from that of Moore. He correctly contends that there is no collision between an industrial bourgeoisie and a landed class in either Costa Rica, El Salvador and Nicaragua and that the agrarian aristocracy has successfully transformed itself into a modern capitalist class --both conditions that belie Moore's argument. Nonetheless, in Guatemala and El Salvador a landed class continues to exercise domination and the commercialization of agriculture has not replaced a labor-repressive mode of production, thus providing some important confirmation of Moore. See "The Social Origins of Dictatorship, Democracy and Socialist Revolution in Central America," Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Sociological

Association, San Francisco, August 8, 1989.

24. See Guillermo O'Donnell, Modernization and Bureaucratic Authoritarianism (Berkeley: University of California, Institute for International Studies, 1973) and Fernando Henrique Cardoso, "Associated-Dependent Development: Theoretical and Practical Implications" in Alfred Stepan (ed.), Authoritarian Brazil (New Haven: Yale University, 1973), pp.142-178.

25. See Samuel P. Huntington, "Will More Countries Become Democratic?" Political Science Quarterly, Vol. 99, No. 2 (1984).

26. Furthermore, through the Church's active promotion of "base communities," it could even be argued that contemporary Catholicism contributes to the creation of a uniquely democratic culture by encouraging participation among previously unorganized groups of the urban and rural poor. See Philip Oxhorn, "Bringing the Base Back In: The Democratization of Civil Society Under the Chilean Authoritarian Regime," (Ph.D. Dissertation, Harvard University, 1989).

27. For criticism of the O'Donnell hypothesis linking capital deepening to authoritarian rule, see David Collier (ed.) The New Authoritarianism in Latin America (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979) and Karen Remmer and Gilbert Merkx, "Bureaucratic-Authoritarianism Revisited," Latin American Research Review, Vol. 17 (1982).

28. Albert Hirschmann has even claimed that this search can be pernicious. In his view, to lay down strict preconditions for democracy, such as "dynamic growth must be resumed, income distribution must be improved, ... political parties must show a cooperative spirit ..." may actually encourage the de-consolidation of existing democracies. Hirschmann argues that this will almost certainly obstruct constructive thinking about the ways in which democracies may be formed, survive and even become stronger in the face of and in spite of continuing adversity. See his "Dilemmas of Democratic Consolidation in Latin America," unpublished notes for the Sao Paulo Meeting on Democratic Consolidation in Latin America and Southern Europe, 1986.

An example of this revised way of thinking can be found in the work of Seymour Martin Lipset. In a recent essay, he, Larry Diamond and Juan Linz have avoided referring to economic development as a "prerequisite" or "precondition" for democracy and spoken of its role as a "facilitating and obstructing factor". "Introduction: Comparing Experiences with Democracy", in Larry Diamond et al. (eds.), Politics in Developing Countries (Boulder, CO.: Lynne Rienner, 1990), pp. 9, 18-21.

29. Cf. Juan Linz, "The Perils of Presidentialism", Democracy (Winter 1990), pp. 51-69 and the ensuing discussion by Donald Horowitz, Seymour Martin Lipset and Juan Linz in Democracy (Fall

990), pp. 73-91.

30. Otto Kirchheimer, "Confining Conditions and Revolutionary Breakthroughs", American Political Science Review, 59 (1965), pp. 964-974.