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INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE AND DEMOCRATISATION IN THE MEDITERRANEAN: TURKEY AS A FACILITATOR

ABSTRACT

The Mediterranean region displays diversity with respect to social, political and cultural systems. This assertion is valid for the case of democratisation. While established democracies may be observed to the North, countries to the South struggle with democratic transitions which are not always straightforward and successful. Sustainable democracy should be based on a consensus between different societal groups on the merits of the regime, the regime's ability to deliver public services and goods, and the internalisation of democratic values by a majority of the citizenry. Intercultural dialogue in the region may support and aid the dispersal of democratic values through a process of exchange, communication and learning. A country like Turkey that stands in the fault line between cultures shares cultural, social and political affinities with countries in the region. While it shares a common religion and cultural similarities with the countries to the South and East, it has engaged in a quite successful process of democratisation. Its relations with Europe and candidacy to the EU had a significant impact on the reform process in Turkey and helped the dispersion of democratic norms and understandings in the country. In this context the experiences of Turkey can have a valuable influence on facilitating dialogue between the diverse cultures of the region. Turkey can act as a role model and transmitter of values that may have an impact on the spread of democracy and foster processes of democratic transition. The Turkish experience may provide invaluable insights for Mediterranean countries into how to deal with such hurdles and shape their trajectories of democratic transition.

INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE AND DEMOCRATISATION

The theme of intercultural dialogue has gained considerable importance in recent years. The view that international politics will essentially be determined by the existence of and conflict between different civilisations dominated the discourse of international politics in the 1990s. One of the best-known authors who hold this view, Samuel Huntington, has been fiercely criticised either because his theory was considered simplistic and reductionist or because it was condemned as a self-fulfilling prophecy[1]. According to Braudel, «Civilisations are separate beings, whose long lives transcend comprehension. They are extremely old and they continue to live within each of us and they will pursue us for a long time to come»[2]. As defined by Braudel, civilisations are the result of spaces, i.e. geographical characteristics of human settlement, of societies that carry and activate civilisations, as well as of demographic and economic factors in any given society. Civilisations provide us with our mental imagery, with symbols and meanings.

The contention that there exist non-intersecting and divergent civilisations and that as such there may be irreconcilable differences between them is difficult to prove given the fact that we cannot discern monolithic blocs of civilisation in today's world. Civilisations have been permeated by the effects of other civilisations and are constantly in a state of flux and adaptation, and this aspect is sometimes underestimated. The denomination «Islamic civilisation», for instance, implicitly refers to the overbearing role of Islamic religion in shaping the cultural, economic and political systems of the countries that are considered to be of that civilisation. But at the same time it conceals a considerable variety in attitudes, including different interpretations of Islam and different world views, almost as to render unhelpful the entire label. Needless to say, globalisation of our days has much exacerbated by the traditionally existing permeability of civilisations, making it even more difficult to conceive of monolithic civilisation blocs. Thus, it becomes appealing to suggest that the concept «civilisation» denotes particular common themes, shared meanings, values and symbols that bond cultures together which are otherwise heterogeneous. While globalisation brings about a convergence in values and lifestyles, it also exposes differences between geographical locations that could result in conflicts and struggles. This may be a conflict-ridden

process that may prove to be beneficial for cultural exchange in the long run. According to François Burgat: «[…] the more people are informed about other cultures, the more they will realize the extent of their shared values».

The bridging of the physical distance between civilisations by using modern means of communication and transportation is not matched by a similar closing of the gap which exists in terms of economic and social welfare. Global media and communicative networks bring people closer together by making their mental and physical realms meet but at the same time they pull them apart by highlighting differences and divergences. In this polarised world of civilisations the theme of intercultural dialogue has become popular at about the same time as the infamous September 11 events. The United Nations General Assembly proclaimed 2001 as the United Nations Year of Dialogue among Civilisations. In a world which is becoming increasingly polarised and where gaps among different regions and cultures breed violence, the necessity of dialogue appears to be a priority.

The global divide is apparent in the case of democracy. While the developed world enjoys high standards of living, political stability and democracy, the developing world is mostly enmeshed in either authoritarian or semi-authoritarian systems, and experiences problems in the transition to democracy. The global waves of democracy could not totally transform the East and South of the Mediterranean region. In their book *Islam and Democracy in the Middle East*, Diamond, Plattner and Brumberg try to find an answer to the question of the lack of democracy in the Middle East region despite considerable progress of democracy elsewhere in the world[3]. The assertion that Islam is not conducive to democracy is proven wrong by the work of authors such as Stepan who drew attention to the fact that it is possible to find many instances of «at least a minimal electoral democracy» among non-Arab Muslim states[4]. Among the reasons that are cited throughout the book and summarised by the editors one may note the following points as possible explanations for the retardation of democracy[5]: persistence of autocrats who control economic and political power through the state apparatus, dependence of opposition groups on the state due to lack of institutional autonomy or financial resources, fragmentation of such groups along religious, ethnic or ideological lines, «repressive security establishments» and the overbearing

dependence of the ruler on these establishments for the maintenance of their regime, state control over economic resources and allocation of favours and benefits to the citizens by way of patron-client relations, existence of a patrimonial political culture that rewards deference to authority and reinforces the ethos of the charismatic ruler, conscious efforts at depoliticisation of society and creating subservient citizens that are dependent on the state and informal networks for economic and other benefits, the manipulation of ethno-religious cleavages in society usually to enable the rule of a minority group such as the Baath regimes in Iraq, formerly, and Syria and resorting to the repression of rival minority groups, as well as failure to find democratic solutions to sub-national cleavages, and finally, growth of radical Islam and its use as a justification for further repression of opposition.

According to Whitehead, dispersal of democratisation happens through three main processes: contagion, control and consent[6]. Emulation, deliberate imposition and the rooting of democracy in the society may all have an impact on democratic transitions. Successful democratisation rests above all on a societal and political consensus on the fundamentals of democracy and a perceived legitimacy of democratic rule. Thus it is closely linked with the existence of values and understandings in line with democracy such as tolerance, respect for differences, and recognition of alternative views. Democracy is at the same time a political system for effective governance. A democracy that can deliver public goods and services, and implement effective policies is also a political system that is sustainable. The merits of democracy, ways in which a democratic system can also be a means of effective governance and methods to make democracy sustainable are very apt and important subjects of intercultural dialogue. Although democracy rests on some fundamentals, each democratic regime has some peculiarities which are vital for the adjustment of the regime to the specific conditions of each society. Consequently, the experiences of different countries in the process of democratisation and their exchange through dialogue may be of utmost importance for a process of comparison, experimentation and learning. An effective dialogue that may contribute to the dismantling of cultural prejudice will open the door to mutual understanding and empathy. It is in this context that the importance of a country such as Turkey lies as a facilitator of dialogue among cultures especially European and other Mediterranean cultures.

DEMOCRATISATION IN THE EURO-MEDITERRANEAN REGION

Disparity in the Mediterranean region exists along the North-South axis between the largely affluent, democratic and stable states in the North and poorer, less developed, and partially free states in the South. In this context Turkey stands at a particular junction between freedom and oppression, poverty and wealth, and stability and turmoil. It also stands at a meeting point or interpreted in a different sense a rift or fault line between different cultural worlds, Islam, communitarian ethos and paternalistic culture to the South, Christianity, individualist ethos and modernised societies to the North. Such traits are important for the advent of democracy for it may be said that democracy becomes sustainable in a secularised society of free-deciding individuals organised into social formations such as political parties or non-governmental organisations rather than communitarian structures and sects or religions.

The global upsurge in fundamentalism and radical interpretations of Islam became especially popular among disoriented young people in the Middle East, Southern Mediterranean and elsewhere. Thus fundamentalist Islam became an alternative to liberal democracy which was seen as «decadent because of its rampant materialism and individualism»[7]. A second opposition to the global dispersion of liberal Western democracy was coined in cultural relativist explanations which put forth that norms such as liberal democracy and human rights were not appropriate for solidaristic and communitarian cultures of the East. Such thinking provided a setback to democratic transformation in the region. Nevertheless, the need for democratisation in the region is more or less uncontested. It should also be noted that as reflected by the debate between cultural relativists who say that democracy like human rights is a Western model and cannot be exported, and those that contend that democratisation is an inevitable process of modernising societies, controversy continues regarding the success of democracy in non-Western societies[8].

The factors that lie beneath the problems in democratisation in the Southern Mediterranean vary from a patriarchal political culture that values adherence to the ruler, ethnic and sectarian diversity that tend to lead to violent clashes and repression, economic problems related to bad governance and problems of unequal income distribution, a political elite that aims to modernise the masses

under a tutelary state or that benefits from a clientelistic state far too much to share its prerogatives, post-colonial relations with the former imperial powers that may lead to tensions, the radicalisation of politics mostly under the effects of growing popularity of radical Islam and such organisations. The result is repression, limitation of opposition and basic rights and freedoms, and civil strife. Such examples attest to three additional problems. Firstly, breakdown of autocracy may not always bring greater freedom; secondly, democracy is a fragile form of regime which should be sustained and protected by institutional safeguards and innovative approaches; and thirdly, years of repression and the ongoing Palestinian question led to the development of anti-democratic forms of opposition that mostly dwell on radical ideologies for legitimacy. Years of autocracy and repression of any opposition curtailed the evolution of an organised society. Thus ethnic and sectarian cleavages continued to determine social relations. As may be observed in the case of Iraq the elimination of the dictator may lead to the surfacing of these cleavages and the fragmentation of the people under rival religious leaders or ethnic movements.

The holding of regular elections in countries such as Egypt and Tunisia led to hopes for an advancement of democracy but failed to lead to peaceful alternation of power due to restrictions placed on the participation of the opposition. This phenomenon of the holding of elections and existence of parliamentary assemblies in a milieu of rigidly-controlled and limited liberalisation is described as «liberal autocracy» by Brumberg[9]. Such hybrid regimes became a commonplace phenomenon in the region and did not lead to further democratisation. Rather they stifled the opposition and led to a perception of relative freedom without actual gains in terms of democracy and rights.

TURKEY IN THE MEDITERRANEAN REGION: DEMOCRATISATION IN SOUTHERN MEDITERRANEAN AND TURKEY'S INFLUENCE AS A MODEL OF DEMOCRATISATION

Turkey is a country that has cultural affinities with the countries of the region. It is also a secular country with a track record of steady democratisation. Thus, under the present circumstances Turkey may play a vital role in the region as a role model signifying success in

achieving democracy in a developing country with a predominantly Muslim population, a strong state tradition and a preponderant military establishment. Turkey gave support to international efforts for democratisation in its region. The Turkish government expressed its support for the reform initiatives of the US and G8 within the framework of the Broader Middle East and North Africa initiative. Prime Minister Erdo an together with the Spanish Prime Minister José Luis Rodriguez Zapatero initiated the «Alliance of Civilisations» initiative to deal with the growing rift between the West and the Muslim world. Recently the Turkish government promoted the Ernst Reuter initiative with Germany aimed at fostering dialogue and understanding among cultures[10].

Turkey shares commonalities with many Mediterranean states in terms of its historical, cultural, and political conditions. The problems that Turkish democracy experienced so far such as low performance and legitimacy, weak institutionalisation, corruption, clientelism, destabilising effects of ethnic and religious cleavages are also being observed in other parts of the Mediterranean. Especially Southern and Eastern Mediterranean is inflicted with the problem of weak civil societies and interventionist states. Due to the perseverance of traditional cleavages such as ethnic, religious or tribal allegiances, states have been unsuccessful in the task of national integration and consolidation of national unity. The authoritarian strategies used could not succeed in bringing about national unity as exemplified recently by the fragmentation of Iraq after the fall of the Saddam regime. This dichotomy between the priorities of nation-building and national integration, and the requirements of democratisation could not be eloquently handled by political leadership. Countries in the region experienced problems of economic development, equitable distribution of the national income, and structural problems such as low productivity, unemployment and underemployment. Demands for political participation have often been repressed and politics have mostly been about allocation of benefits and privileges in return for support and deference to political authority. Political leaders have generally been prone to authoritarian rule and avoided instigating democratisation programs due to their preoccupation with main-taining power. Opposition and societal counter-movements were shunned and suppressed. In terms of political culture, it may be possible to observe state-centred societies where communitarian

ethics, solidaristic movements and primordial attachments take precedence over individual rights and freedoms. Lastly, international factors did not support democratisation in the region. The region has mostly been immune to consecutive waves of democratisation until recently.

Although the socio-economic structure and cultural disposition in Turkey resemble those of its Mediterranean counterparts, its historical development and unique position as a country in the meeting point of civilisations differentiate it from other states in the region. Despite problems in performance, it may be said that democracy acquired a general legitimacy in the country. Turkish democracy had a long and difficult journey. It was inflicted with problems such as fragmentation, political violence, repression of opposing views and problems in institutionalisation. Censuring of opinions, repression of opposition groups and leaders to protect the overarching interests of the state, and a weak civil society have been among the problems experienced in Turkey along its path of democratisation. Recently, the upsurge in Islamism and Kurdish separatism has been seen as threats to the main tenets of the regime in Turkey. Such systemic challenges stalled the democratisation process since it was feared that democratic opening of the regime would increase its vulnerability to the effects of such movements. At more or less the same time, the prospect of EU membership worked as a powerful incentive fostering and accelerating the democratisation process.

The aim of fulfilling the political aspects of the Copenhagen criteria turned the broad, general and ambiguous discourse of democratisation into a clearly identifiable set of tasks to be accomplished urgently. Thus in the case of Turkey, the internal demands for democracy, the gradual consolidation of democratic institutions, expansion of rights and freedoms, and the positive effects of 60 years of experimentation and learning coincided with the stimulus provided by the prospect of EU membership. The intersection of internal and external factors led to a democratic reform process that disposed of constitutional and legal restrictions and limitations on liberal democracy. Thus, despite the fact that Turkey still experiences problems in the functioning of democracy, it may be said that the institutions, structures and mechanisms of a fully-fledged democracy have been established and consolidated in this country.

The Turkish model presents a case of successful democratisation despite several hurdles, and adverse conditions. Moreover, it also displays a unique endeavour of secularism in a predominantly Muslim country where a party with Islamic roots was able to come to power, pacify its radical elements and even become the forerunner of the EU cause. Turkey has several advantages in terms of democratisation such as its long history of building democracy, secular tradition, comparatively advanced level of modernisation, national unification, strong political institutions, the interaction with Europe that did not take place in a colonial context, and lastly and most importantly the EU perspective. It also differs from the countries in the region due to its being a non-Arab, secular and usually pro-Western country. Nevertheless it also has some disadvantages that may be problematic for democratic consolidation such as weak civil society, fragmentation, ethnic and regional conflict, communitarian ethics, and problems related to socio-economic development. The Turkish experience may provide invaluable insights for Mediterranean countries into how to deal with such hurdles and shape their trajectories of democratic transition. Turkey may provide a model for these countries that are pressed between the demands of their societies, the impositions of the West and regional security problems such as the Iraq war and the Palestinian problem. The successful culmination of Turkey's efforts at EU membership may enhance Turkey's value as a positive role model in the region.

conclusion

The Mediterranean as an adjacent and strategically important region is vital for the economic and political well-being and security of the EU. Political instability, emergence of militant movements, economic hardships, scarcities, rise of fundamentalism, under-development, social problems, ethnic discrimination and other related problems may exert a destabilising influence over Europe. Such sources of instability, poverty and chaos display a high probability of spilling over into Europe as a result of the boundary-transcending nature of such problems, the existence of large numbers of immigrants in European countries originating from various parts of the Mediterranean, and the continuing migratory

pressures. Thus the projection of EU values and standards including not only the discourse of democracy and human rights but conditions such as higher living standards that may contribute to the upholding of these values, to the South and East of the Mediterranean can be seen as one of the most important aspects of the EU's external relations. The EU supports the democratisation of the region and sees greater democracy as one of the most important factors that will enhance stability and security in the region.

According to Joffe, economic failure, political instability and unrest in the region cause anxiety in the EU due to increased pressures for immigration and threats to regional security[11]. Increasing the welfare and standard of living in the East and South of the Mediterranean is linked with issues of democracy and effective governance. Success in democratisation is vital for the security and development of the region. Yet anticipated improvements do not materialise at the desired level and the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership does not seem to be delivering the intended outcomes. In a survey conducted in 2003-2004 among 19 countries participating in the partnership, it was concluded among other judgments that «from the European point of view [...] integration across the Mediterranean is precluded by lack of political will [...]»[12]. The gap between the North and the South of the region preclude the emergence of effective understanding and exchange.

It should be underlined that the region is not made up of static autocracies. Changes and transition processes are well underway in the countries of the region including Jordan, Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco. However there are still various obstacles on free and fair competition and the enjoyment of fundamental rights and freedoms. A consolidated democracy requires the backing and reinforcement of social and political groups in the society. Thus the «consent» of critical groups in the respective societies has a determining influence on the transition process. A process of unceasing, continuous and balanced dialogue would support the dispersion of democratic values and understandings in the region. Such dialogue stands a chance of triggering learning, exchange of experiences, and change, provided that it does not take the form of imposition or dictate.

Throughout history, the Mediterranean acted as a sea of interaction, communication and exchange among diverse peoples

and cultures. The Euro-Mediterranean initiative of the EU may be viewed as a resurrection and revitalisation of the Mediterranean as a zone of peace and vibrant interaction. The countries of the Mediterranean have a lot in common despite the differences and are strongly interdependent since security, stability and well-being in the region can be attained as a whole. The countries have a lot to share and to learn from each other. The experiences of each can shed light on the developments in another. In the case of democratisation the experiences of a country like Turkey that has gone through hardships and downturns in its long journey towards democratic government may be instrumental for the other countries of Eastern and Southern Mediterranean that share social cultural and historical similarities.

The approach of the EU is of crucial importance for further democratisation in the South of the Mediterranean. As implied by Turkey's experience, the international context is acting as an important catalyst for triggering domestic developments in the direction of political reform and social progress. The interaction, communication and cooperation in the Euro-Mediterranean region can support processes of transition in these countries. Here what is vitally important is the genuine desire of the European partners to foster change and progress in the region by setting standards of democratic governance and by instigating credible and meaningful efforts at cooperation and exchange. The link between living standards and socio-economic indicators of human development with the adoption of democratic values and standards is part of the comprehensive approach to security and stability in the Mediterranean.

Democracy can not be imposed from outside; it has to have roots in the society and should be based on a broad consensus about the legitimacy of the system. The acceptance of democracy as the only acceptable form of government cannot be based only on the benefits that it will bring. It should also be based on a normative consensus about the merits of democracy. Hence the link between a successful democratisation and the existence of a democratic culture. Democracy in the Euro-Mediterranean area is dependent on the diffusion of democratic values and norms such as human rights and tolerance. In this context intercultural dialogue between democratic and democratising countries of the region is of vital importance for the diffusion of democratic norms and values. Turkey, a country that

has gone through a long and arduous process of democratisation may act as a facilitator of dialogue between the North and the South or the West and the East of the Mediterranean by sharing its own experiences and using its own cultural baggage to act as a transmitter and interpreter of cultures.

PROPOSALS FOR ACTION

1. Intercultural dialogue on democracy and democratic values should not be confined to the elite level; it should involve segments of civil society. Thus NGOs, political parties, municipalities and local governments, schools, media and informal networks should be involved in the dialogue on democracy. Such a platform may be funded by the EU, regional governments and other international organisations. Various methods may be used such as web sites, e-groups, summer schools, cultural exchange programs among the youth, and e-learning portals.

2. Accumulation of knowledge and information is also vital. The stereotypes and common wisdom regarding Islam, civil society and human rights in the East, the non-congruence between Islam and democracy should be questioned. An effort should be made to try to come up with alternative approaches to study of the history of the Mediterranean, Islam and civil society, Islam and democracy, role of women in Muslim societies and similar topics. The monopoly of discussing and explaining such issues that used to belong to religious scholars or orientalist Western thinkers or historians should be broken. An academic panel on Islam and democracy may be formed to deal with these questions with the aim of bringing a fresh approach to Islam reconciling it with modernity.

3. At the same time the Euro-Mediterranean platform may be used to address the question of prejudice and preconceptions in Europe regarding Islam and interpretations of Islam, to get civil society organisations to know different cultures better and try to dismantle stereotypes. It is important to get civil society organisations in Euromed countries together to engage in joint projects.

4. The majority of people in Muslim countries do not support radical Islam. It is important to involve the silent majority into intercultural dialogue. This may be accomplished by going beyond

formal networks and involving local governments, civil society organisations and schools into joint projects. The emphasis should be on common values that bind people together such as tolerance, humanism, solidarity, freedom and justice.

5. Young people are very important in the effectiveness of intercultural dialogue. School curricula in Mediterranean countries should be studied and if necessary rearranged. Themes that may breed feelings of animosity and enmity should be heeded. In the East and South of the Mediterranean, schools should focus on establishing the basics of a civic culture. In the North, the Eurocentric version of history should be adjusted to make room for the contributions of other civilisations to history.

6. The role of Turkey as a facilitator in intercultural dialogue should be instrumentalised. Turkey due to its particular features outlined in the paper is particularly apt to play such a role. Its culture is a mixture of Eastern and Western influences. It may be a part of multiple regions and cultural conglomerations at the same time. It may promote and facilitate intercultural dialogue.

7. Studying the Turkish experience may also be illuminating in terms of the democratisation process in the Mediterranean region since Turkey shares commonalities with many countries that are going through such processes. Historical legacies that still influence countries in the region to this day such as the Ottoman heritage may be studies by academic networks in a multidisciplinary approach with a view to assessing their effects on political culture, state-society relations, and democratisation processes.

8. Mutual trust and empathy is one of the basic requirements for effective dialogue. Trust would be linked to getting to know one an other and understanding that commonalities may override differences. Joint literature, cinema and drama projects may be instigated involving Mediterranean countries focusing on cultural affinities. For example TV series involving the meeting of different cultures may be helpful in creating a sense of trust in broad groups of the population (an example would be the TV series *Foreign Bridegroom* involving the marriage of a Turkish girl with a Greek boy that was popular both in Turkey and Greece).

[1] See S. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilisations and the Remaking of World Order*, New York, Simon and Schuster, 2003. One writer opposes his thesis in the following way: «As regards the clash of civilisations, our conclusion is that such a clash does not appear imminent for, among other things, states rather than civilisations continue to provide individuals with a badge of identity». A.H. Seifudein, *On the End of History and the Clash of Civilisation: A Dissenter's View*, in «Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs», vol. 21, n. 1, 2001, p. 36. Similarly Fouad Ajami criticises Huntington's thesis and contends that civilisations do not control states; states control civilisations, F. Ajami, *The Summoning*, in «Foreign Affairs», vol. 72, n. 4, 1993, p. 9.

[2] Translated by the author from the Turkish, translation from F. Braudel, *Uygarlıkların Grameri (The Grammar of Civilisations)*, Ankara, İmge, 1995, p. 21.

[3] L. Diamond, M.F. Plattner and D. Brumberg (eds.), *Islam and Democracy in the Middle East*, Baltimore-London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003.

[4] A. Stepan and G.B. Robertson, *An «Arab» More Than «Muslim» Electoral Gap*, in «Journal of Democracy», vol. 14, 2003, cited in D. Brumberg and L. Diamond, *Introduction*, in L. Diamond, M.F. Plattner and D. Brumberg (eds.), *Islam and Democracy in the Middle East*, cit., p. x.

[5] *Ibidem*, pp. xi-xiv.

[6] L. Whitehead*, The International Dimensions of Democratization: Europe and the Americas*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1996, p.4.

[7] L. Diamond, J.J. Linz and S.M. Lipset, *Introduction: What Makes for Democracy?*, in id. (eds.), *Politics in Developing Countries: Comparing Experiences with Democracy*, Boulder (CO)-London, Lynne Rienner, 1995 (2nd edition), p. 2.

[8] According to the annual survey *Freedom in the World 2005* conducted by the international non-governmental organisation Freedom House, out of a total of 192 independent states, 89 are run by free regimes, and 54 are under partly free regimes while 49 countries are classified as not free. Upon a selective examination of survey results, it is possible to observe that none of the countries that participated in the Rabat Forum for the Future instigated for cooperation between G8 countries, regional organisations and countries of the Broader Middle East and North Africa region are denoted as free. Six of these countries are described as partly free while fifteen are denoted as «not free», *Freedom in the World 2005* Survey, Combined Average Ratings Countries, available at www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=193&year=2005 (2 January 2006).

[9] D. Brumberg, *The Trap of Liberalized Autocracy*, in L. Diamond, M.F. Plattner and D. Brumberg (eds.), *Islam and Democracy in the Middle East*, cit., pp. 35-47.

[10] Erdoğan expressed his support for democratisation in a speech he made in the USA: «Turkey is ready to do its fair share to promote democratization in the Middle East and facilitate such a momentous transformation [...]. Currently she is making historic strides to establish an environment of cooperation in her neighbourhood. These steps are conducive to the birth of a new culture of positive relations in our region based on cooperation and interdependence, R.T. Erdoğan, *Democracy in the Middle East, Pluralism in Europe: Turkish View*, Harvard, Harvard University-Kennedy School of Government, 30 January 2003, available at http://bcsia.ksg.harvard.edu/BCSIA_content/documents/Erdogan-%20Harvard %20Prepared%20Remarks.pdf (19 November 2005).

[11] G. Joffe, *The Status of the Mediterranean Partnership*, Euromesco Research Paper, 2005, pp. 1-2, available at www.euromesco.net/imgupload/the_status_of_the_emp.pdf (7 July 2006).

[12] *Ibidem*, p. 6.

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