

# Introduction

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## *Reflections on "Problem Selection" in Comparative Politics*

Scholars in comparative politics, correctly, are increasingly explicit about the methodologies they employ and the quality of the evidence they use. However, as a group we have not written much about how we select the problems we choose to study. This may be because "problem selection" has a personal as well as a professional dimension. The professional dimension is reproducible; the personal dimension is not. But, do we not miss learning something about the scholarly process by our relative silence on the subject of how and why we select the problems to work on that we do?

Surely, in the evolution of our research, problem selection comes first. It is only after such selection that we can formulate hypotheses about the problem; think about which theoretical and methodological approaches are most appropriate; train ourselves, if necessary, in the most powerful research techniques available; and finally design and actually carry out a research. It is precisely the process of chasing the *problem* that normally also leads us to pursue promising leads from other disciplines. It is in this sense that the most fruitful interdisciplinary work is "done under one skull," as Albert O. Hirschman once counseled me.

In fact, I believe *all* aspects of research are, in a fundamental sense, problem driven. It is from this perspective that I am taken aback when, on occasion, I am approached by brilliant doctoral candidates who have spent a great deal of effort mastering a powerful research tool and who then ask me what topics to apply it to. They are starting their research endeavor in the wrong place. I worry whether they will have the passion to sustain an increasingly creative inquiry, in which they continuously, with more power and more focus, go up and down the research ladder in their dissertation, and, with the "enthusiasm and work"

I would like to thank Archie Brown, Juan J. Linz, and Nancy Leys Stepan for their close reading of an early draft of this Introduction, and the Ford Foundation for its support of my research on federalism.

2. Introduction *políticas de governantes, que acentuam a cultura de colosso dos regimes autoritários.*

which Max Weber said was necessary to the production of good scholarship, identify and address new problems in their careers.<sup>1</sup>

Professionally, as comparativists we work in “invisible colleges” that include not only our peers throughout the world working on related problems, but also some of our teachers, and many of our research students. Within this “invisible college” some problems emerge as logical next challenges, leading collaborating and competing groups of scholars to work on them intensively. Often the partial resolution of one problem makes apparent a major new research agenda. Let me give a specific example drawn from my own experience. Juan J. Linz and I had worked for over a decade with a group of scholars from Europe, South America, and the United States on the problem of why democracies broke down. Much of the scholarly tradition in this area had focused on the structural and economic factors that contributed to the rise of the powerful, nondemocratic forces of Nazism in German, Fascism in Italy, Falangism in Spain, and Pinochet’s dictatorship in Chile. This tradition often left a sense of the inevitability of these democratic breakdowns.

While not rejecting this tradition, Linz and I felt that the literature could be enriched, and breakdowns possibly seen as less overdetermined, if more research attention were given to what we thought were neglected aspects of democratic breakdowns—specifically political factors, especially the contribution to breakdown made by democratic incumbents themselves. In the preface to the 718-page, four-volume work that eventually emerged from this project, *The Breakdown of Democratic Regimes*, Linz and I wrote that: “High priority for further work along these lines should now be given to the analysis of the conditions that lead to the breakdown of authoritarian regimes, to the process of transition from authoritarian to democratic regimes, and especially to the political dynamics of the consolidation of postauthoritarian democracies.”<sup>2</sup>

As soon as we wrote that sentence, we realized we had a huge new research agenda before us. We thus began co-teaching at Yale University what may have been the first university course on the problems of transition to, and consolidation of, democracies. Eighteen years later our book on the subject appeared, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America and Post Communist Europe*.<sup>3</sup>

Often the personal aspects of the comparativist’s life interrelate with and help direct and redirect this powerful professional dynamic. We often select a problem to work on because we feel deeply uneasy with the classic literature on

1. Max Weber, “Science as a Vocation,” in *Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, ed. H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills (New York: Oxford University Press, 1958), 136. In the same quotation Weber says that no scholarly work is worth pursuing unless it is “worth being known” and is pursued with “passionate devotion.”

2. Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan (eds.), *The Breakdown of Democratic Regimes* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978), p. x; my italics.

3. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996). As I shall explain later, this book in turn yielded a new set of unresolved problems concerning federalism, democracy, and nation that we felt we had to turn our attention to, so another 500-page book looms.

it, especially if the literature seems to be at odds with aspects of the world to which we have been personally exposed, and which affects us deeply. Intellectual and political unease often stir creativity. For example, Lijphart's theory of consociationalism grew out of his concern, as a citizen of the Netherlands doing his doctoral course work at Yale, and reading that cross-cutting cleavages were considered useful, indeed almost necessary, for democracy. He knew that most cleavages in the Netherlands were compounding. He wondered what made democracy nonetheless work in that setting. His personal experience and his scholarship led him to the political concept of "consociationalism."

Linz, as a Spaniard who had been born in Germany, and a good comparativist, felt increasingly uncomfortable with the dominant typology of regimes in the literature, which divided polities into a totalitarian-democratic dichotomy. Spain fit neither type, and in the early 1960s was not in transit to either. Out of his intellectual unease and personal reflection Linz suggested "authoritarianism" as an additional regime type, and stipulated four key dimensions that differentiate an "authoritarian" regime from a "totalitarian" or a "democratic" regime.<sup>4</sup>

Hirschman's unease with overarching ideologies, his ability to doubt existing paradigms of knowledge in a creative fashion, and his profound belief that politics is important has a connection to his experiences as a young Jewish anti-Nazi and anti-Fascist underground activist, in Germany, Italy, and France.<sup>5</sup>

What follows is this Introduction is my attempt to reflect, in a more explicit way than I do in any of the articles themselves, what led me, from a personal and a professional point of view, to the problems they address. Unlike the autobiographical essays by Dahl, Lijphart, and Linz that I cite, my Introduction is not intended as a full autobiographical statement about my life or career as a comparativist. It is simply an attempt to describe some of the choices that went into the specific articles that make up this volume.<sup>6</sup>

4. For illuminating autobiographical articles by Dahl, Linz, and Lijphart concerning the indirect, but powerful, links between their problem selection and aspects of their personal histories, see Hans Daalder (ed.), *Comparative European Politics: The Story of a Profession* (London: Pinter, 1997).

5. See Albert O. Hirschman, *A Propensity to Self-Subversion* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1995), esp. the chapter by the same title, "My Father and Weltanschauung, circa 1928," and "Doubt and Antifascist Action in Italy, 1936-1938."

6. I am aware that these explanations will be very incomplete. For example, I have learned an immense amount from, and my own research agenda has been shaped by, the more than twenty-five doctoral dissertations I have worked on which have been published. Also, like fellow comparativists Peter Evans and Philippe Schmitter, I was greatly shaped by the fact that I was fortunate enough to write my dissertation-book on Brazil and become permanently involved—no matter where I was—with this important alternative academic and political tradition. My multiple Oxford experiences, and my career-long friendship and collaboration with Juan J. Linz and many of his associates, meant that the European traditions of comparative politics, political philosophy, and comparative political sociology have influenced me. Other experiences that, as will become apparent, have also influenced my problem selection and probably my style as a researcher and writer were my activities as a foreign correspondent, human rights activist, university rector, and even my active duty military service.

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Two last points before I discuss each of the articles individually. Because each argument is best understood within the specific time and context that it was written, I have chosen to make no changes in any text, except for updating editorial references where I had listed a publication as "forthcoming". I also decided, and the editors of Oxford University Press concurred, that it was best to let each piece stand as a self-contained article; thus there is a small amount of repetition between some of the pieces.

### I. The State and Society

From the very beginning of my career I have been concerned with the relationship between the state and society. In Part I of this collection I reprint four articles that advance arguments about how we should think about this relationship.

1 My first argument is with Samuel P. Huntington about "military professional-  
2 alism" and democratic civilian control.<sup>2</sup> My second argument is with those  
3 branches of North American pluralism (and classic Marxism) that virtually  
4 deny an independent role for the state.<sup>3</sup> The third article argues that we can  
5 and must demonstrate how the degree of nondemocratic state power over civil  
6 society is a sociopolitically constructed (and deconstructed) variable.<sup>4</sup> I con-  
7 clude with an argument about the need in democratization theory and practice  
8 for a concept of "political society."

In comparative politics we work within an intellectual tradition, and we turn to the works we have read and the concepts we find in them. However, when we confront them with political and social realities we sometimes realize that they do not fit; indeed, that the concepts obscure or confuse. Then our task is to reformulate them, highlight different dimensions, sometimes introducing new conceptualizations. For me, this means that a concept must be "problematized" and then, after reformulation, used if it shows how a cluster of phenomena cohere in ways not previously seen. For my early work Samuel P. Huntington's concept of military "professionalism" was such a concept.

Huntington's *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations* had an immense intellectual and political impact on academics and practitioners concerned with civil-military relations.<sup>7</sup> Huntington's central thesis was that it was precisely the increasing "professionalization" of the military that would lead to "objective civilian control."

When I read Huntington's brilliantly written book in 1965, however, it did not match what I knew of the world. After graduation from Oxford in 1960 I did my compulsory military service as an active duty officer in the United States Marine Corps, both in the Caribbean and in Southeast Asia. As a marine, I was

7. (New York: Vintage Books, 1964).

Metodo de Stages. Os conceitos podem obscurecer e confundir.  
... (1) ... (2) ... (3) ... (4) ... (5) ... (6) ... (7) ... (8) ...

worried about the growing emphasis I saw being given in US military training programs to the putative nation-building role of the military. After the marines, I became a special correspondent for *The Economist* in West Africa and South America. In March 1964 I filed a story, before the military takeover in Brazil, about an impending coup. Later, in what then were democracies in Uruguay, Argentina, and Chile, I sensed the growing centrality of the military in domestic politics. While I was doing Ph.D. course work at Columbia, I was asked to write background analyses about US foreign aid policies to the Latin American military by Senators Robert Kennedy and Frank Church. I was struck with the fact that these senators, implicitly or explicitly, accepted Huntington's analysis of military professionalism. As long as military schooling and promotion patterns were becoming increasingly "professional," the senators saw no problem with expanding the role of the military into areas that I saw as deeply political. I came to the conclusion that it would be analytically and politically useful for me to problematize the "concept of professionalism." I was convinced I could, and should, demonstrate that there was not one model of military professionalism, but two, with diametrically opposed outcomes for civil-military relations. The result was the article "The New Professionalism of Internal Warfare and Military Role Expansion," reprinted here as Chapter 1.

In this article I argued that what I call Huntington's model of "old professionalism of external defence" had five interrelated subarguments: (1) the function of the military is "external defence"; (2) the military skills required are "highly specialized skills incompatible with political skills"; (3) the scope of military action is "restricted"; (4) such professional socialization "renders the military politically neutral"; and (5) the impact on civil military relations "contributes to an apolitical military and civilian control."

On the basis of the research I did for my first book, the understanding I developed while in the military about the impact of "organizational mission," and my analysis of military curricula in a number of countries such as Brazil, Peru, Indonesia, and France during the Algerian war, I developed an alternative analytic model of military professionalism. I called the model "the new professionalism of internal security and national development."<sup>8</sup> My model of military professionalism differed from Huntington's model of military professionalism in that, using the same five variables as Huntington, I built an equally interrelated, but fundamentally opposed, set of arguments. In the new professionalism (1) the function of the military is "primarily internal security"; (2) the military skills required are "highly interrelated political and military skills"; (3) the scope of military professional action is "unrestricted"; (4) professional socialization is such that it "politicizes the military"; and (5) the impact of the new professionalism on civil-military relations is that it "contributes to military political managerialism and role expansion."

8. My first book was *The Military in Politics: Changing Patterns in Brazil* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971).

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Note that I did not discard the concept of "military professionalism." I reformulated it into its political and intellectual polar parts. Both the "old professionalism" and the "new professionalism" are empirically researchable if one examines military journals or curricula.<sup>9</sup> The concept of "new professionalism," in fact, shows how a cluster of phenomena cohere in ways not previously seen. It was thus worth problematizing the concept of "military professionalism."

The next article reprinted in this section comes from my book *The State and Society*.<sup>10</sup> This book grew out of the dismay I felt about a theoretical lacuna. I found that many of the most important theoretical writings in politics, pluralist, and Marxist alike, which I read as a postgraduate student at Columbia, and that later I was using as required readings at Yale, where I took up my first post as an assistant professor, assigned very little independent weight to the state. Indeed, at Yale one of my closest and most distinguished colleagues again and again urged me to use the word "government" instead of the word "state."

I felt professionally and personally uneasy with such a political science both as a way to understand US politics, and especially as a template for comparative politics. The military that were leading the highly coercive regimes that I studied in Brazil, Chile, Argentina, and Uruguay certainly seemed to have some interests of their own as organizations. The *nomenklatura* in communist Europe had their own state-bureaucratic interests. Both the military and the *nomenklatura* radically altered possible societal inputs to the state and skewed state outputs. Whether as a writer for *The Economist*, or as a reader of such books as Alexander Gerschenkron's *Economic Backwardness in Historical Perspective*,<sup>11</sup> it was clear to me that in many parts of the world the state itself was producing the means of production in state industries and controlling access to finance in state banks.

Furthermore, the political systems that I knew the best had Roman law or Napoleonic legal codes. Such codes gave the state greater discretionary powers in rule making and rule adjudication than that found in a US style common law system. In some countries noncommon law legal systems coexisted with, and were reinforced by, a normative tradition I call "organic statism." This tradition legitimized, more than a liberal tradition would, the structuring by the state of economic, group, and political relationships, in the name of the organic unity of state and society. For comparative politics, as it was being developed in the

9. For example, the political scientist Jorge Rodríguez and I, after a pretest with a different journal, independently classified 396 articles in Peru's most important military journal into four categories. In the language of content analysis, we had a "coefficient of inter-coder reliability" of 89.6 percent. The percentage of new professional articles in Peru went up from 1.7 in 1954-7 to over 50 in 1964-7, the year before the military seized power and attempted to completely restructure Peruvian state and society. For the content analysis, see my *State and Society* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978), 127-36.

10. For details, see n. 9.

11. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1966).

United States, to be so influenced by an almost "stateless" perspective seemed to me to be empirically distorting and methodologically disempowering.

In the preface to *The State and Society*, where I developed these themes, I stated that

the state must be considered as something more than the "government". It is the continuous administrative, legal, bureaucratic and coercive systems that attempt not only to structure relations between civil society and public authority in a polity but also to structure many crucial relationships within civil society as well. Consolidated modern states should be compared not in terms of whether they structure such relationships, but in terms of the degree to which, and the means through which, they do so.

I went on to write that "while almost everywhere the role of the state grew, one of the few places it withered away was in political science."<sup>12</sup>

I decided to directly confront, and attempt to subvert and reverse, the stateless trend in North American political science. I therefore opened the book with "Liberal-Pluralist, Classic Marxist, and 'Organic-Statist' Approaches to the State," which is reprinted here as Chapter 2. This article, and the overall book, which advances and utilizes propositions about such phenomena as the relative possibility of installing "inclusionary corporatism" and/or "exclusionary corporatism," or the different capacity of the same state to control multinational corporations, depending on the characteristics of the industry which gives the state more or less leverage, eventually stamped me as an early "new institutionalist," and led to my association with a later project called *Bringing the State Back In.*<sup>13</sup>

With my book *State and Society* seven years behind me, my contribution to the *Bringing the State Back In* project took as a given that the state was present as a powerful conditioning variable in the polity. In the article for the book, which is Chapter 3 in this section, "State Power and the Strength of Civil Society in the

12. *The State and Society*, pp. xi, 3. I should have written *North American* political science. I may have been particularly sensitive to the statelessness of such North American political science because of my previously mentioned membership in two other invisible colleges (Brazilian and European) where the state never lost its prominence. For example, in a recent book on British politics, each of the three editors in their separate articles argue that the state never disappeared from British political science. See Jack Hayward, Brian Barry, and Archie Brown (eds.), *The British Study of Politics in the Twentieth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press for the British Academy, 1999), esp. 33, 370, 467.

13. For example, J. March and J. Olsen in their "The New Institutionalism: Organizational Factors in Political Life," *American Political Science Review*; 78 (1984), 734-9, assert that "the new institutionalism insists on a more autonomous role for political institutions" (p. 738). They then cite three works, Peter J. Katzenstein (ed.), *Between Power and Plenty: Foreign Economic Policies of Advanced Industrial States* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1978), Stephen D. Krasner, *Defending the National Interest: Raw Materials Investments and U.S. Foreign Policy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978) and Stepan, *State and Society* (1978). Theda Skocpol, in her introduction to P. Evans, D. Rueschmeyer, and T. Skocpol (eds.), *Bringing the State Back In* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), urges that scholars move toward a more relational approach to the study of state capacities, and refers the reader to my *State and Society*, which has "provided an important model for further studies of state capacities in many policy areas" (p. 19).

3<sup>o</sup> Meu terceiro paper marca um interesse pelo modelo burocrático...

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Southern Cone of Latin America," the problem I set myself, and with which I was very concerned at the time, both as a human rights activist and as an early writer about democratization, was how and why strong nondemocratic state power, vis-à-vis democratic forces in civil society, was not a constant, but a variable. I was particularly interested in analysing the comparative capacity for resistance to state power. I therefore took as an analytic "set" the universe of Guillermo O'Donnell's four "bureaucratic-authoritarian" regimes, and explored the conditions under which democratic forces in civil society were most, and least, able to alter the relations of power.

By the time I wrote "Military Politics in Three Polity Arenas: Civil Society, Political Society and the State" (1988), the last article in this section, civil society in countries such as Poland and Brazil had emerged as the "celebrity" of democratization. But there were increasing analytic, political, empirical, and normative distortions unwittingly being generated by the celebration of civil society.<sup>14</sup> Civil society pressures are often crucial for bringing about and pushing "liberalization" forward. However, if our concern is with democratization, a dominant discourse of "civil society against the state" is not only incomplete, it is dangerous. The practitioners and theoreticians of democratization movements needed not only a concept of civil society, but also a concept I called "political society." By "political society" in a democratizing setting I mean that arena in which the polity specifically arranges itself for political contestation, to gain control over public power and the state apparatus. At best, civil society can destroy a non-democratic regime. However, a full democratic transition must involve political society, and the composition and consolidation of a democratic polity must entail serious thought and action about those core institutions of a democratic political society—political parties, elections, electoral rules, political leadership, intraparty alliances, and legislatures—through which civil society can constitute itself politically to select and monitor democratic government.<sup>15</sup>

## II. Constructing and Deconstructing Polities: Contexts, Capacities, and Identities

If the institutional context is fixed, and the actors and their goals stipulated, an incentive based, often game theoretic, rational choice analysis can be quite

14. For example, such euphoria often leads to an almost complete lack of scholarly and political attention to the "inconvenient fact" that the "military as organization" would still have some power within the state apparatus even after they were no longer the "military as government." Witness Chile more than a decade after Pinochet left the presidency.

15. The phrase "political society" had, of course, been used by other authors, such as Paulo Farneti in his contribution to Linz and Stepan, *The Breakdown of Democratic Regimes*. However, the literature on democratization was being weakened by its lack of specific attention to what I began to call political society in the above sense.



powerful.<sup>16</sup> However, I have often been interested as a comparativist in how new contexts emerge; how new power capacities—particularly those of a democratic opposition—can be developed; how political, national, religious identities are created and/or transformed; how the values attached to destroying or sustaining an institutional context can diverge sharply; and how some political "games"—depending on the context—are possible, and some impossible. The articles in Part II examine the agents, paths, and processes involved in such construction and deconstruction in politics.

From 1976 to 1986 I worked with a group of scholars on the project that eventually led to the four-volume series edited by Guillermo O'Donnell, Philippe C. Schmitter, and Laurence Whitehead *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule*.<sup>17</sup> Much of our discussions were devoted to creating a body of interrelated concepts such as the "liberalization" versus "democratization" distinction. While I was fully engaged with my colleagues in this effort, I felt it would also be useful to call attention to the consequences of "path dependency." Without attempting to make a mutually exclusive and collectively exhaustive selection of paths, I chose eight analytically distinctive, and historically important, paths to redemocratization. My argument in "Paths toward Redemocratization: Theoretical and Comparative Perspectives" (Chapter 5) is that each path taken constructs new *contexts* which in themselves have an independent and different weight on political outcomes. I certainly do not want to imply that the path taken will overdetermine political outcomes for ever. However, I believe that we can, and should, attempt to achieve greater clarity about the particular strengths and weaknesses of each path in relation to the institutionalization of democracy. The article therefore attempts to spell out the theoretically predictable implications each of the eight paths has for reactionary, status quo, progressive, or revolutionary politics.

In 1986 the new democracies of Argentina and Uruguay seemed, to some, on the brink of breakdown. In Chile Pinochet was still in power and activists wondered what type of democracy could be constructed in a post-Pinochet world. It was in this context that Juan J. Linz and I, as the editors of *The Breakdown of Democratic Regimes*, were asked by a group of current and former presidents and political leaders of Latin America, including Raúl Alfonsín and Jimmy Carter, to talk to them about what aspects of the interwar European breakdowns of democracy (and Spain's success in consolidating democracy by the early 1980s) might be most useful for them to think about. The result was "Political Crafting of Democratic Consolidation or Destruction: European and South American Comparisons" (Chapter 6).

16. The problem I explore in my article with Cindy Skach later in this volume (Ch. 12), "Constitutional Frameworks and Democratic Consolidation: Parliamentarianism versus Presidentialism," conforms to all of these assumptions. Therefore, a major part of our inquiry is structured around the comparative analysis of the consequences of different incentive structures.

17. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986).

More than any article we have ever written, we believe that it presents, in a compressed form, the political dimension of the breakdown of democracies in interwar Europe. The article documents that the thesis “the Great Depression led to political breakdown and fascism” needs to be strongly qualified when the actual historical record is examined. Germany and Austria were exceptions among the advanced capitalist countries in that “semiloyal” incumbents used the depression to help them craft regime breakdown by allowing them to cast “system blame” on democratic institutions. This was not inevitable. In fact, unemployment in Norway, Denmark, and the Netherlands in the early 1930s was higher than in Germany. However, in all three countries democratic incumbents did not indulge in semiloyal system blame. The incumbents went about politically crafting new forms of stable, broad-based, democratic welfare states. Furthermore, in the West European country where unemployment was the worst, the Netherlands, fascist parties were never able to gain more than 7.9 percent of the vote. We also noted that the “depression equals fascism” argument had an additional historic weakness. The argument that economic depression led to democratic breakdown overlooks the fact that, in the less advanced capitalist countries in Europe, the rise of fascism in Italy in 1922, the emergence of the Primo de Rivera dictatorship in Spain in 1923, and the Polish, Portuguese, and Lithuanian crises of 1926 preceded the Great Depression. We also advance arguments about democratic control of violence and constitutional engineering.

“On the Tasks of a Democratic Opposition” (Chapter 7) had a strange career. In fact, it was the first article I wrote for the *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule* project. But some of the scholars in the project who came from countries where the outcome of the struggle for democracy was by no means clear disliked the article intensely. They argued that if they tried to carry out all of the tasks I discuss, they would be destroyed. I later published the piece in the *Journal of Democracy* because I was (and am) convinced that changing the relationships of power from domination by a nondemocratic state to the hegemony of democratic forces requires analytic and political attention to *each* of the five core tasks of the democratic opposition I discuss.<sup>18</sup>

The following article, “Democratic Opposition and Democratization Theory” (Chapter 8), was largely written as a revisionist critique about “pacted transitions.” Four-player pacts—involving regime hardliners and regime softliners, and opposition moderates and opposition militants—were increasingly being seen by important scholars in comparative politics as an attractive, and almost a necessary, part of the construction of democratic transitions. But, I believe it is important to point out why, and in what circumstances, there are limits to how one can construct democratic transitions. The article attempts to spell out why, from a theoretical perspective of regime type, in many regimes—

18. Paradoxically, this article is not referred to in Linz and Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation*, because I did not want to repeat myself. Both of us now feel that this inadvertent decision was a mistake.

"sultanism," "totalitarianism," and "early post-totalitarianism"—four-player games of pacted transitions are impossible.<sup>19</sup> Impossible because all of the players do not, and cannot, exist. How, for example, can a moderate opposition player exist and carry out tactical and strategic bargaining with moderate regime softliners in a sultanistic or a totalitarian regime? The article also contains a revisionist reformulation, grounded in the recent history of countries such as Poland, Hungary, Russian, and China, of the "civil society against the state" literature. I close with a brief discussion of an as yet under-theorized aspect of opposition theory: How are "non-issues" turned into "issues"?

My "Modern Multi-national Democracies: Transcending a Gellnerian Oxymoron" and a related article with Juan J. Linz, "Political Identities and Electoral Sequences: Spain, the Soviet Union, and Yugoslavia" (Chapters 9 and 10) grew out of my experiences in communist, and early postcommunist Europe, where I conducted some research almost every year after 1988 for various projects.<sup>20</sup> Furthermore, I served from 1993 to 1996 as the first rector and president of Central European University (CEU).<sup>21</sup> At the CEU students from all of the twenty-seven countries of postcommunist Europe were actively recruited and robustly present. I accepted the challenge of being the first rector of CEU because it gave me a chance to contribute, as a scholar and as an individual, to three things that interested me greatly: understanding and where possible advancing democracy; understanding and building socially useful institutions; and educational innovation. At this time in history, in this setting, a new problem for me to study was clear—namely, how to reconcile nationalism and democracy, especially in multinational settings.

By 1986, three years before the wall came down in Berlin, two new important bodies of literature were in place that should have allowed activists and analysts to think about the multinationalism–democracy problem creatively. Ernest Gellner had published his classic *Nations and Nationalism* in 1983 and Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities* was published in the same year.<sup>22</sup> In 1986 the four volumes of *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule* were published. Rereading these two bodies of literature in Eastern Europe in the early 1990s, what struck me as amazing was that the democratization literature never thematized nationalism as a problem—there is not a single chapter devoted to the theme in the four volumes of the transition project; meanwhile, the nationalism

19. Definitions and discussions of all these terms are found in Ch. 8.

20. Particularly important in my deepening concern with the democracy–multinationalism problem were my public talks and private meetings in Serbia, Croatia, and Slovenia in the months before Croatia and Slovenia declared independence and the civil wars throughout much of Yugoslavia began.

21. CEU had branches in Budapest, Prague, and Warsaw and a partner in Moscow. During this period I was also one of the directors of the Soros Foundation, which was concerned with postcommunist Europe.

22. Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1983) and Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983).

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literature never thematized democracy—in neither Anderson's nor Gellner's book is the word democracy even found in the index.

Since Gellner and I were both at CEU, I approached him to see if we could work together to help overcome this embarrassing parallel play in our "intellectual sandboxes." With his characteristic verve, he immediately said "Yes!" He created the format. I would open with four public lectures on nationalism, which had to include a critique of his work. He would return the favor with four public lectures on democracy and a critique of my work. Amid Serbs, Croats, Bosnians, and Kosovars from the former Yugoslavia; Estonians and Russians from the former USSR; and Romanians and Hungarians from the former Austro-Hungarian empire, Gellner attended all my lectures, rapidly tapping his cane at points he no doubt disagreed with. Tragically Gellner, at full intellectual and moral force, died suddenly before he presented his critique. I publish my critique of my great colleague knowing that the article and the reader would have been better informed if Gellner had lived to flail me.

The article I wrote with my career-long colleague and friend Juan J. Linz, on political identities and electoral sequences, addresses and documents three themes that I touch on in my Gellner critique. (1) Human beings can have multiple and complementary identities. (2) Identities, because they are to a great extent socially and politically constructed, can change extremely rapidly. (3) Political leadership and political choices (such as the choice to make the first democratically competitive elections polity-wide or regional) can help create multiple and complementary, or polarized and conflictual, political identities. The integrating and disintegrating states of Spain, Yugoslavia, and the USSR made and make all three of these claims painfully clear.

Part II concludes with "The World's Religious Systems and Democracy: Crafting the Twin Tolerations," drawn from a project that I eventually hope to develop into a book with the same title. I have always been interested in religion and politics, even though the theme has not figured prominently in comparative politics, and I myself have not written much on the subject.<sup>23</sup> My attention to the problem of religion and democracy was intensified by my East European experiences.

A key part of the nationalist conflicts in Yugoslavia involved religion. There was constant debate about whether there were cultural and religious boundaries to democracy. Also, on a few occasions, students at CEU asked me if they could take my course on democracy, even though they came from Orthodox Christian or Muslim countries. They worried that their countries did not possess the cultural requisites that much of the social science literature argued were necessary for democracy, and that existed in Western Europe, such as the "separation of church and state," or "secularism." Such conflicts, perceptions,

23. For a discussion of this neglect in comparative politics, see Stathis N. Kalyvas, *The Rise of Christian Democracy in Europe* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996), esp. the intro.

and misperceptions dismayed me, and began to move me toward a new set of problems and arguments.<sup>24</sup>

From different perspectives the eminent political philosopher John Rawls, Samuel P. Huntington, and even the founder of the conflict approach to democratization, Dankwart Rustow, advance arguments that I believe make it difficult to think in creative and possibilistic terms about resolving conflicts between democracy and religion. My article begins with four pervasive "maps of misreadings" of the actual West European experience with religion and democracy. I then apply this revisionist framework to countries where the Confucian, Islamic, and Orthodox Christian presence is strong in the polity.<sup>25</sup> I emerge with strongly non-Rawlsian, non-Huntingtonian, and non-Rustovian arguments about how the twin tolerations have been, or could be, constructed in such societies.

### III. The Metaframeworks of Democratic Governance and Democratic States

Part III of this volume features arguments about the "metaframeworks" of democratic institutions. For *democratic governance*, at the highest level of abstraction, there are virtually only three metaframeworks used in modern democracies: presidentialism, parliamentarianism, and semipresidentialism. Each of these three models has different incentive structures and different repertoires of available institutional mechanisms. For *democratic states*, at the highest level of abstraction, there are virtually only two metaframeworks used in modern democracies: unitary states or federal states.<sup>26</sup> In unitary states, as

24. My decision to write on the topic of religion and democracy was, if anything, "overdetermined." I was born and raised a Catholic and my first degree was from the University of Notre Dame. In my readings in history and politics in the late 1960s and early 1970s I frequently came across arguments to the effect that the major reason why countries such as Spain, Portugal, and Latin America had such a poor democratic record was that they were Catholic. In the 1940s and 1950s there was an analogous "Luther to Hitler" literature on Germany. Vatican II developed the democratic content of Catholicism's multivocality. I was convinced that all religions, to some extent, were multivocal and had at least some doctrines or practices that were usable for democracy. My concern with religion and democracy was also shaped by my work with Brian Smith and Scott Mainwaring on their doctoral dissertations, my two-year participation as a member of the American Catholic Bishop's Conference committee concerned with social justice in the world, and my participation, first as a student and later as a professor, in Juan J. Linz's thought provoking courses on religion and politics.

25. Confucianism is more a code of behavior or philosophy than it is a religion. However, the issue of Confucianism figures prominently in the literature on the cultural boundaries to democracy, such as that by Huntington.

26. To be sure, globalization is creating new possibilities for supranational states and subnational states, which analysts should be and are watching closely. However, the concept of modern democracy among large groups of people is mainly concerned with states. The European Union is functionally increasingly federal, but politically confederal

we have seen, key questions concerning how democracy functions often revolve around whether the demos is mononational or multinational, and if multinational, whether the dominant political elite insists upon pursuing a nation-state building strategy. Federalism raises this and many other questions of equality, efficacy, and liberty. The majority of individuals who live in democracies live in federal systems. Unfortunately, in my judgement, no important political institution has been so undertheorized, and incorrectly theorized, as federalism. What follows are arguments about the three metaframeworks of democratic governance, the two metaframeworks of democratic states, and some arguments about democratic consolidation.<sup>27</sup>

The article "Constitutional Frameworks and Democratic Consolidation: Parliamentary versus Presidentialism" (Chapter 12) grew out of an exchange at a December 1990 meeting in Budapest of the East-South System Transformations Project, which brought together specialists on Eastern Europe, southern Europe, and South America.<sup>28</sup> When we were discussing topics for future research and dividing up our collective work, Adam Przeworski lamented that although there were assertions in the literature about the probable impact of different types of institutional arrangement on democratic consolidation, there was no systematic data available. In his notes about the Budapest meeting Przeworski reiterated that "we seem to know surprisingly little about the effects of the particular institutional arrangements on their effectiveness and their durability. Indeed, the very question whether institutions matter is wide open."

I was shocked by Adam's Przeworski's assertion and almost immediately said I would, as someone who believes "institutions matter," accept his challenge to provide some concrete data on the problem. I chose to compare the impact of presidentialism and parliamentarianism on democratic consolidation.<sup>29</sup> Cindy Skach and I first constructed two contrasting models for managing democratic

and democratic legitimacy still emanates, to a great extent, from the democratic governments (all unitary or federal) of the fifteen member states.

27. The structure and impact of some of the other indispensable and influential democratic institutions, such as party systems and electoral systems, varies greatly depending on each country's choice of metaframework concerning democratic governance, and the metaframework of the democratic state.

28. The collective results of our discussions were eventually published as Adam Przeworski et al., *Sustainable Democracy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

29. The presidentialism-parliamentarianism debate of course has a longer history. In modern comparative politics the argument about the particular vulnerabilities presidentialism creates for the democratic political process began with an "excursus" that Juan J. Linz inserted into Linz and Stepan (eds.), *The Breakdown of Democratic Regimes* after it was already in galley. Linz's long-circulated "underground classic" on the subject was finally published as "Presidential or Parliamentary Democracy: Does it Make a Difference?," in Juan J. Linz and Arturo Valenzuela (eds.), *The Failure of Presidential Democracy* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994). Intellectually and politically I prefer the title of Linz's article to the title of Linz and Valenzuela's edited volume. The Stepan-Skach article attempted to advance the literature toward a series of probabilistic propositions.

politics, "pure parliamentarism" and "pure presidentialism."<sup>30</sup> We then advance a number of deductive arguments; i.e., that the incentive systems of pure parliamentarism are more "coalition requiring" and "coalition sustaining" than pure presidentialism; that pure parliamentarism, because of its greater coalitional capacities and incentives, can function democratically with a larger number of parties in the political system than can presidentialism; that the institutional repertoire of pure parliamentarism gives democratic politicians more degrees of freedom to resolve a "crisis of government" before it becomes a "crisis of regime," and thus would be less prone to military coups. We then did a "large  $n$ " analysis to see if these theoretically derived predictions are empirically supported, and found that they are.<sup>31</sup>

30. Of course, there are numerous subtypes *within* each metaframework. For example, some observers argue that the British model has gone from a "Member of Parliament" driven, to a "Cabinet" driven, to a "prime ministerial" driven, to (with Thatcher and even more Blair) a "presidential" driven, subtype of parliamentarism. But, if Britain ever adopted a pure proportional representational system, and no party or coalition of parties commanded a stable majority of seats in parliament, the head of government and, indeed, the government, precisely because Britain had a parliamentary and not a presidential metaframework, could be voted out of office by a vote of no confidence. In the presidential metaframework impeachments exist, but votes of no confidence are simply not part of the opposition's political repertoire. In presidential systems there are also crucially important subtypes with important consequences. For example, a two party subtype that regularly produces presidential majorities, and a fragmented multiparty subtype that seldom produces a presidential majority, function quite differently. When I began research for this article, Cindy Skach was in the early stages of her Ph.D. course work at Columbia and she was my research assistant. Her contribution to my research and thinking was so substantial that I invited her to co-author the article. She is now an assistant professor of political science at Harvard.

31. Subsequently, Adam Przeworski, Michael Alvarez, José Antonio Cheibub and Fernando Limongi, on the basis of an analysis of a massive quantitative study, arrived at a similar conclusion. See their "What Makes Democracies Endure?" *Journal of Democracy*, 7 (Jan. 1996), 39–55; see esp. 44–7. Some analysts, of course, argue that the distinction between "presidential" and "parliamentary" systems is not very useful because of the great variety of presidential and parliamentary systems. There are indeed many subtypes of parliamentary and presidential systems, but varieties of "subtype" should not lead us to eliminate distinctions between "types." For example, some excellent scholarship has been done on constitutional engineering proposals to reduce some of the features of presidentialism that might cause problems for democratic governments. They argue that the likelihood of "divided government" can be reduced by concurrent legislative and presidential elections. To avoid a president being elected without a majority, they recommend second round majority runoffs. Very importantly, they recognize that presidentialism has a well documented problem in sustaining democracy in a context where there are a great number of parties, as measured by the Laakso-Taagepera index. They therefore put great emphasis on electoral system changes that might help reduce the effective number of political parties. These include single member district plurality elections or, if proportional representation is used, they urge closed lists, high thresholds, and small district magnitudes. See Matthew Shugart and John Carey, *Presidents and Assemblies: Constitutional Design and Electoral Dynamics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992) and Scott Mainwaring and Matthew Shugart (eds.), *Presidentialism and Democracy in Latin America* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997). I want to make three observations about this literature. First, I find substantial merit in almost all of their proposals for ameliorating the problem of a high number of parties in a presidential system. Indeed, for the case of Brazil, which has had over seven "effective political

From a comparative and global perspective, the metaframework of democratic governance that has been least studied is semipresidentialism. Durverger's pioneering work is about semipresidentialism in West European democracies. The fact that semipresidentialism was undertheorized for democratizing countries, and for countries where the political party system was relatively weak, became an increasingly serious intellectual and political lacuna by the late 1980s and early 1990s. Undertheorized or not, the system was diffusing. Sri Lanka had shifted from parliamentarianism to semipresidentialism. Politicians in most of the post-Soviet states, attracted by the demonstration effect of the French Fifth Republic (and the De Gaulle possibility) opted for semipresidentialism. A referendum was held on semipresidentialism in Brazil. As the Pinochet dictatorship came to an end in Chile, semipresidentialism was widely discussed, as it is now in Korea. This climate of opinion contributed to the unique Israeli experiment with a direct election of a prime minister (a system of democratic governance that does not fit into any of the three major constitutional types), and to the current debate about the direct election of the president in Italy.

My political and theoretical unease with semipresidentialism and democratization is that, as a model, semipresidentialism seems to me to have the potential of producing clashes between the dual executive—the president and the prime minister. Analytically, I am convinced that there can be “three positions” in semipresidentialism. Position 1: the president is a leader of a party, or a coalition, with a majority in both houses. Position 2: the president does not have a majority in the parliament, but the prime minister does. Position 3: neither the president nor the prime minister has a majority in the parliament.<sup>32</sup>

Position 1 has the least potential for conflict within the dual executive because the system functions like pure presidentialism without a divided government. Position 2 is potentially more conflictual because the prime minister

parties” over the past decade, I am on the record as advancing virtually identical arguments. Second, the proposals seem to me to strengthen, rather than weaken, my argument that presidentialism has a characteristic set of potential institutionally related problems for democratic governance. Third, even if a specific presidential system adopted all the Shugart, Carey, and Mainwaring reforms, that presidential system would still not have available the extra degrees of freedom that are part and parcel of the parliamentary repertoire, such as votes of confidence for presidents, and the ability rapidly to change presidential leadership without elections to avoid a crisis of government becoming a crisis of regime. Such reforms are absolutely beyond the constitutional engineering potential of presidentialism as a metaframework.

32. Max Weber, again in “Science as a Vocation” (p. 138), argues that every academic “‘fulfillment’ raises new ‘questions’; it asks to be ‘surpassed’ and outdated.” In this sense, Suleiman and I are happy to acknowledge that we have been surpassed by the excellent University of Oxford D. Phil. by Cindy Skach: “Semi-Presidentialism and Democracy: Weimar Germany, the French Fifth Republic, and Post-Communist Russia in Comparative Perspective” (1999). Among many other things she has refined what I call Positions 1, 2, and 3 by noting that they are electorally generated subtypes of semipresidentialism.



with a parliamentary majority, *de jure* and *de facto*, should be the head of government, but the president, even though he does not control a majority in the parliament, still has some constitutionally embedded military, intelligence, foreign policy, and decree prerogatives. "Cohabitation" will thus work best if the president loyally accepts that the prime minister has the right to control the government. Not all presidents do. Position 3 is much more fraught with problems for the working of a democratic regime. Neither the president nor the prime minister commands a majority. But the president (particularly in a system that has recently been nondemocratic, and if political parties are weak, and presidential decree making prerogatives are great) can easily take the political system out of the democratic box and rule by decree.

I enlisted my friend and colleague the eminent scholar of French politics Ezra N. Suleiman to help me examine, for comparative purposes, why the French Fifth Republic seems to have avoided most of the potential pitfalls inherent in the metaconstitutional framework of semipresidentialism. A major finding is that France created a whole series of additional political mechanisms that ameliorated these potential problems and helped it stay in Position 1 for virtually every month of its first twenty-six years of semipresidentialism. Furthermore, these same mechanisms have contributed to the fact that throughout its entire duration of more than forty years French semipresidentialism has never been in Position 3.

Russia, from January 1992 to July 1998, in the absence of the specific political mechanisms used in France (and France's historical circumstances), was *never*, even for a month, in Position 1 or Position 2.<sup>33</sup> Many of the non-Baltic post-Soviet countries have semipresidential executives who have taken their countries out of Position 3 into nondemocratic "superpresidentialism." If Brazil, which has extreme scores on the standard political science indicators for number of political parties, electoral volatility, and party proliferation, had adopted semipresidentialism in the 1993 referendum, it probably would have been in Position 3 for almost all of the years since then.<sup>34</sup>

As Juan J. Linz and I neared completion of our book *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and Post-Communist Europe*, we realized that no matter how fascinating we ourselves might find our 486-page book, many people interested in the subject might never read the tome. Thus, when the editors of the *Journal of Democracy* pressed us as members of the editorial board to put down some of our book's essential messages in less than twenty pages, we reluctantly acquiesced and wrote "Toward Consolidated Democracies." In retrospect, we are happy we did.

33. I refer the reader to Skach's Oxford D.Phil. for more comparative analysis and data concerning France and Russia.

34. In sharp contrast, for much of the 1980s and 1990s semipresidentialism in Portugal was normally in Position 1. When the former Socialist Party leader and prime minister Mário Suarez was elected president, a democratically consolidated Portugal *de facto*, and to a lesser extent *de jure*, increasingly moved toward a parliamentary system.

Only *after* putting the book to press, after six years of writing, were some things crystal clear to us. No state, no democracy. Free and fair elections are a necessary, but not sufficient, condition of democracy. A complete “free market” has never existed in a democracy and never can. Modern consolidated democracies require a set of sociopolitically crafted and accepted norms, institutions, and regulations—what we call “economic society”—that mediate between state and market. If a polity has a “usable state” and an “economic society” and rapidly delivers on a basket of democratic political goods, citizens can, and often *do*, rationally accept a massive (but they assume temporary) decline in their basket of economic goods. If there is only one nation in a state, “nation-state building” and “democracy building” are complementary logics. But, in much of the world that is not now democratic, more than one nation exists in the state. In these circumstances nation-state building and democracy building are conflicting logics. However, we document that human beings are capable of multiple and complementary identities. Thus, if political leaders do not socially construct the polarization of political identities, if they help create structures of inclusive citizenship, and deliver a common “roof of rights” for all citizens, loyalty toward what we call a “state-nation” is possible.

Problem selection often grows out of a previous book, especially when the author in the midst of one book is “ambushed” by a new problem. Again and again Linz and I, as we were writing *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation*, were ambushed by federalism. Of the nine states that once made up communist Europe, six were unitary and three were federal. The six unitary states are now five states (East Germany has united with the Federal Republic), while the three federal states—Yugoslavia, USSR, and Czechoslovakia—are now twenty-three independent states and most of postcommunist Europe’s ethnocracies and ethnic bloodshed has occurred in these postfederal states. Why? Yet, as we thought about it, it was also clear to us that empirically, if a polity had territorial areas with different dominant languages, and was multinational *and* a democracy, every single one of these polities is now, like Spain, a federation. Why?

Since many of the polities in the world that are by no means consolidated democracies (e.g., Indonesia, Russia, Nigeria), or even democracies at all (e.g. Burma, China, Malaysia), are also multinational, with different languages spoken in different territories, it would appear that it is of the highest priority to think about how federalism, democracy, and multinationalism can cohere. Unfortunately, as I read the comparative politics literature, little of it helped my thinking with this problem. The classic literature on federalism is dominated by one of the great founders of rational choice theory, William Riker. Riker makes no significant distinction between democratic federalism and non-democratic federalism. But the key question now is precisely what is needed to sustain a democratic federation in a multinational setting.

Riker sees *all* enduring federations as emerging out of a voluntary bargain to pool sovereignty by polities all of which have a substantial degree of previous

sovereignty. I call this "coming together" federalism; in effect, Riker elevated the model of the United States to a universal. But, Belgium, Spain, and India were originally *unitary states* with multinational populations, states which, in order to facilitate different groups living together democratically in one state, devolved by constitutional means into federations. I call this "holding together" federalism.

Riker also often calls institutions "congealed tastes." He argues that if the individual tastes of the majority of people change, the institutions can change. But, the hardest types of institutional rules to change are those that require the favourable vote of those who benefit by the existing rules. Those federal systems, for example, which give constitutionally embedded special prerogatives, such as the agreement to allow a great overrepresentation in the federation of underpopulated subunits, are such institutions. In new institutionalist terms, federations are particularly "sticky" institutions and particularly "path dependent."

Riker calls US style federalism the model that all other federations aspire to. But, in fact, the United States in comparative terms—partly due to its strong "coming together" state's rights origins—is an extreme "demos constraining" outlier among modern democratic federations.<sup>35</sup> The US model will not be a model for most new federations, especially if they are multinational, because the US federal model is coming together, demos constraining, and constitutionally symmetrical. Many of the possibly new democratic multifederations in the world will be "holding together," "demos enabling" federations with "constitutionally asymmetrical" structures binding together the members of the federation.<sup>36</sup> We must therefore, in our thinking about federalism, go beyond Riker and US federalism. I thus conclude this volume with a conceptual, theoretical, and empirical overview of how we might go forward. My "Toward a New Comparative Politics of Federalism, (Multi) Nationalism, and Democracy: Beyond Rikerian Federalism" spells out a new general approach and applies it to the United States, Germany, Spain, Brazil, and India.<sup>37</sup>

35. For definitions and discussions of all these terms, and for documentation about the outlier status of US federalism, see my "Federalism and Democracy: Beyond the US Model," *Journal of Democracy*, 10 (Fall 1999), 19–34, as well as the article in this volume.

36. For more detail, see *ibid.*

37. My article on Federalism in this volume will eventually be incorporated into another 500-page book Linz and I are now writing called *Federalism, Democracy and Nation*.