

Book Review

Stephen Calleya and Monika Wohlfeld (Eds), *Change and Opportunities in the Emerging Mediterranean*. Mediterranean Academy of Diplomatic Studies, University of Malta, 2012. 495. pp.,

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In *Change and Opportunities in the Emerging Mediterranean*, the editors Stephen Calleya and Monika Wohlfeld, have succeeded in pulling together outstanding essays on challenges facing the Southern Mediterranean countries in transition to provide insight into policy measures that should be adopted to create a more stable and prosperous future. It is important to note that this book is a collection of essays written by eminent academics from the North African countries that are experiencing change and reform as well as European scholars. They provide important conceptual and methodological insights as they investigate the diverse patterns of political mobilization, the various indigenous traditions of order and governance, and the institutional mechanisms that have shaped the state-making process.

There are several strong points to be said about this book. The first one is the emphasis on the issue of revolutionary change in the emerging Mediterranean states. Authors point out that the timing of the Arab Spring, which coincides with financial and economic crises in the EU and in the entire Mediterranean region, may make it difficult to formulate clear responses and provide adequate incentives for change. But after years of political, social, and economic stagnation in the MENA region, the events of 2011 provide new opportunities for the creation of a more stable and coherent region, if dealt with appropriately (p. 415). It would thus be short-sighted for policy-makers in the EU to pass up this historical opportunity. It is the role of commentators and academics from both shores of the Mediterranean to highlight both potential pay-offs of decisive and supportive context-specific actions and potential costs and dangers of ignoring the events that unfolded and their implications.

In total, the book has five parts. The first part entitled 'The Events of 2011'; it addresses case studies from Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya to highlight the causes of the revolution. The second part entitled 'The Challenges of Good Governance: Political and Economic Perspectives' focuses on issues of human rights and governance. The third part entitled 'The Role of the Civil Society in the Changes in North Africa', deals with the changing role of the civil society in North Africa. The fourth part entitled 'Lessons Learned from Other Regions of the EU Neighbourhood', focusing on the lessons learned from Central and Eastern Europe, the Orange Revolution in Ukraine, and Turkey as a source of inspiration for the Arab Spring. The fifth part of the book entitled 'EU's Response to Challenges in the Emerging Mediterranean', contains strongly critical view on the EU's policies towards the region.

In the first part of the book, entitled 'The Events of 2011', authors propose evaluations of what they respectively call 'revolutions' or 'Arab Spring'. Starting with Eyadat's article on the 'Arab Revolutions of 2011: Revolutions of Dignity', he presents an overview and analytical framework of the Arab Revolutions of 2011, as well as explore these uprisings in several significant ways. He concluded that the overview of democratic transitions and continuing revolts can assist us in predicting the outcomes for the rest of the region. Based on social conditions, Algeria, Sudan, and Lebanon may likely join the Arab revolutions of 2011. Many monarchies in the Middle East have not witnessed massive uprisings, due to extended family ruling and incremental liberalization (p. 3-19). In order to predict and contemplate uprisings in the future, studies must cross dimensions in both the political and social world.

Driss's article on 'the Revolution in Tunisia: An Opportunity for a Real Change', he notes that the spontaneous movement in Tunisia developed outside of any political framework, with no evident ideology, and hence he sees the difficulty in calling it's early days a revolution (p.

22-23). Other articles in this part are Khader's article on 'Tunisia: The Paradigm of a 'Happy Revolution', he argues that there are no revolutions but rather there are many Arab revolts that are not necessarily identical in their starting point, their development and their outcome (p. 36). Moreover, in another section of the book, Spencer uses the term Arab awakening, and Lutterbeck 'uprisings'.

The comprehensive methodology of this project is nicely illustrated by Maddy-Weitzmann, entitled 'The Arab Regional System and the Arab Spring', he analyses the response of the neighboring and regional states to the events in Tunisia, Egypt and especially Libya and Syria. He sees events in Syria as a key issue, pointing out that its 'ultimate fate may help answer the question whether, and to what extent, being 'Arab' will still be a meaningful attribute of political identity in the coming years (p. 93).

In the second part of the book, entitled 'The Challenges of Good Governance: Political and Economic Perspectives' the five authors (Grech, Ammor, Tzannatos, Lutterbeck and Pullicino) choose different points to look at what the next steps for countries in transition in North Africa will be. The lead off paper in this section is Grech's on 'Human Rights and Democracy in North Africa: Challenges for Change', he argues that human rights and democratization were intrinsic to the demands of the Arab populations and that the success of the revolutions will rely on how effectively the new governments respond to these demands (p. 103).

Other articles in this part is Ammor's on 'Good Democratic Governance in the Mediterranean', he focuses on democratic governance (rather than good governance, a term that is widely used, but which he criticizes for seeing rights and freedoms as a mean toward a goal rather than the goal). Ammor concludes by describing the challenges facing Arab leaders, in particular pointing to 'the establishment of democratic institutions that guarantee a fundamental separation of powers' (p. 130).

Tzannatos's article addresses the economic context, entitled 'The Euro-Med Economies in Early 2010s: Two Coasts in Crisis', he focuses on the economic challenges. He argues that both coasts of the Mediterranean face crucial and tough economic challenges. Both sub-regions seem, so far, to be adopting crisis reactions rather than structural responses (p. 134).

In seeking to explore the role of the militaries in the various countries of the region, Lutterbeck in his article 'The Role of Armed Forces in the Arab Uprisings' reaches the logical conclusion that the link of the military on the one hand to the regime and on the other to the population helps explain the different outcomes of unrest in different countries, and underlining that the role of the military needs to be addressed urgently in order to allow for transition processes and democratization (p. 171).

Finally, a more recent phenomenon is the use of online tools to change the political reality. Pullicino's article on 'Media in North Africa: the Case of Egypt' round up the list of major internal determinants addressed in the book, she focusing on the media landscape in Egypt. Pullicino claims that significantly in coming to the tipping point, online space crossed over to real space but contends that the struggle for media freedom in Egypt is far from over (p. 204).

In the third part of the book, entitled 'The Role of the Civil Society', Spencer points out that the internet has opened up new possibilities for non-violent forms of resistance and exchange in the Arab world. In addition to civic and social actors there are increasingly using links, resources, ideas and organizational methods beyond the confines of the territory of their nation-state. This applies clearly to the cases of protest in 2011 in North Africa and the Arab world (p. 221).

Regan's article, entitled 'Women, Citizenship and Change: The Role of Women's Movement in the Arab World', takes a fairly longitudinal look at the issue of the role of women in Arab society, he offers some comments on their more recent role in the Arab Spring. Women have played a key role in the popular demonstrations and movements. Thus, the rights of women are likely to emerge as a 'divisive' issue that some may wish to put aside until other broader

objectives are achieved, while others rightly insist that it remains fundamental to the process itself (p. 225).

While Halaseh's article entitled 'Civil Society, Youth and the Arab Spring' focus on the role of the Youth in the Arab spring. She argues that youth movements must step up their game; especially when the more established parties who have the leadership and the experienced political machinery can co-opt the process of state-building for their own goals. New governments must include youth and women into all levels of governance, as democratization cannot be a top-down process (p. 271)

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Paul Walton's contribution extends to covering 'Intercultural Dialogue and the Emerging Mediterranean: Realigning the Anna Lindh Foundation Strategy'. It is a case study that addresses the Anna Lindh Foundation, created to promote intercultural dialogue which between Western and Arab societies had been in the past seriously affected by distorted perceptions, particularly during the previous decade. He argues that the events in North Africa will allow increasing dialogue and focusing on similarities rather than differences (p. 290).

The most important part of the book, entitled 'Lessons Learned from Other Regions of the EU Neighbourhood' focusing on lessons learnt from other regions of the EU neighborhood, Jones, Hopkinson and Haran undertake the complex task of looking at transition process in Central and Eastern Europe, and deriving the relevant issues and lessons learnt. The approaches taken vary. Jones points out that it is not surprising that the Arab Spring gave rise to comparisons with the anti-communist uprisings in Central and Eastern Europe in 1989, and the collapse of the Soviet Union. He argues however that many factors distinguish the two historical situations and regions: democratic traditions, the fact that Arab states seems to proceed separately rather than as a group toward change, and most importantly, the draw of the European Union membership prospect that is lacking in North Africa (p. 305-310).

Hopkinson argues the key differences for him are that in Central Europe there was a single (albeit declining) hegemony, and this hegemony collapsed, whereas in North Africa there are at least two regional powers, which will continue to play this role. In addition, unlike the Communist regimes in CEE, which shared similar political and economic structures, the political structures in the MENA region are more heterogeneous. Hopkinson, like Jones, argues that the key difference is the incentive structures generated by the European Union. Therefore, unless there is a radical rethinking of the EU's potential geographical finalité politique, the role of the EU in the MENA region will be limited, and a powerful external incentive for reform will not be available (p. 332).

Haran argues that the lessons learnt from the Orange Revolution are: first, the results of revolutions, which bring about freedoms, should be institutionalized. Second, revolutionary change is a complicated and long-term process. Third, the role of outside influence is vital, and 'carrots' must be provided. Criticism only stimulates isolationism, anti-Western rhetoric or even defensive actions (p. 346).

In my opinion, the most important part of this book is the role of Turkey that is analyzed by Bahri and Balcer, from different perspectives. Bahri takes a cautious approach arguing that the Arab states in transition should look to Europe for inspiration and for models (as Europe has been the inspiration and model for Turkey). Turkey's democratic deficits lead Bahri to question the possibility of Turkey acting as a model for the region's countries. He argues also that Turkey should not build up expectations of involvement but rather it should carefully and conscientiously draw lessons from its past experiences with the MENA region. Turkey could become a valuable model if the steps necessary to complete the negotiation process with the EU would be undertaken, but Bahri cautions that this is a long and rough road (p. 369).

While Balcer looks at strengths and weaknesses of Turkey as model for the Arab world, and concludes that Turkey will remain an attractive source of inspiration for Arabs, provided that it becomes a fully democratic country and continues to be the democratization leader in this region. The rapidly developing Turkish economy could become a driving engine for

some Arab states. Particularly important is Turkey is potential to impact on mainstream Islamic circles, whose influence is likely to grow significantly in the immediate future. The realization of this scenario would be boosted by the reactivation of Turkey's negotiation talks with the European Union (p. 386).

In the final section of the book, entitled 'EU's Response to Challenges in the Emerging Mediterranean', Marchetti and Calleya provide an assessment of EU's policies towards the region. Calleya reviews the plethora of EU initiatives towards the Mediterranean during the post-Cold War period and argues that a more coherent cooperative relationship needs to be sought between Europe and the southern Mediterranean. The dramatic events of 2011 present a unique historic opportunity that the EU must support if it wants to be a credible actor on the international stage. It must refocus policy-making on strategic objectives enshrined in the Barcelona Declaration of 1995 and implement the dynamic agenda that supports these states (p. 429).

Marchetti discuss the policies of the European Union, aimed at creating a 'ring of friends', to the east and to the south, according to his argument, the EU should pay increasing attention to its neighbors. However, he criticizes the EU policies for creating tensions between short-term goal of stability and long-strategies aimed at promoting common values. The EU will have to consider possibilities of increasing cooperation incentives by opening up the European integration project to its neighbours in the Southern Mediterranean (p. 411).

Mainwaring addresses the two important facets of relations between the EU and Southern Mediterranean, migration and energy security. According to Mainwaring's argument, the events of 2011 prompted new migratory flows out of the Southern Mediterranean region. The level of immigration into Southern Europe, as a result of the Arab Spring, is not significantly different from that of previous year (p. 432).

Analyzing the energy security situation in the Mediterranean, Weissenbacher points out that this period of change may bring about opportunities. New governments in the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean might address many of the outstanding and difficult issues. They might collaborate more with one another; they might harmonize rules and standards at the regional level, and reduce the massive subsidies to energy consumption; they also might attempt to decrease the region's energy import and fossil fuel energy dependency, invest in energy efficiency measures, and accelerate the development of renewable energy options (p. 469).

Finally, analyzing the Mediterranean dialogue and its supporting to transition processes in North African countries analyzed by Wohlfeld, he argues that apart from the EU, there may be other European frameworks that have experience in supporting democratization and transition processes that should not be overlooked as potential sources of expertise for North Africa in the wake of the Arab Spring. The OSCE could become a much more interesting resource for the countries in transition in North Africa, but for this, the OSCE would have to review its current practices and develop a vision for its role outside of its region of membership (p. 493).

To sum up, the book's great strength is its focusing on the implication of the Arab spring in the Mediterranean region. It is an important contribution to the growing literature on the issues of the Middle East region, a collection of essays that substantially succeeds in its ambitions. It will give both a general roadmap to those that require one, and food for thought for more advanced readers. It is a massive yet highly enjoyable and comprehensive study for those interested in Arab political systems literature, specifically those who wish to learn more about the recent changes in the Middle East region.

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