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DEMOCRATIC PARLIAMENTARY MONARCHIES

Alfred Stepan, Juan J. Linz, and Juli F. Minoves

Alfred Stepan is Wallace S. Sayre Professor of Government at Columbia University and the founding director of the Center for the Study of Democracy, Toleration, and Religion (CDTR) there. Juan J. Linz (1926–2013) was Sterling Professor Emeritus of Political and Social Science at Yale University. Juli F. Minoves is assistant professor of political science and associate director of the International Studies Institute (ISI) at the University of La Verne, California.

Students of democratization would do well to think about monarchy more. In particular, they should pay closer attention to the role that monarchies have played in the evolution of democracy. It is widely known that many of the older European democracies developed out of non-democratic “ruling monarchies.” In fact, seven of Western Europe’s sixteen democracies with populations of a million or more are monarchies: Belgium, Denmark, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden, and the United Kingdom. And of course, Japan is a monarchy.

Yet somewhat surprisingly, although historians and political scientists have produced many excellent country studies, comparative politics has contributed very little to the general analysis of how monarchies move toward democracy.¹ In particular, the scholarly literature on democratic transitions features scant comparative work on attempts—both failed and successful—to bring about the full democratization of monarchies. To offer such a comparative perspective is one of our present essay’s central tasks.

The reasons for the neglect are no doubt many, but one may be that of the forty or more new democracies that have come into existence since 1973, and which have been the focus of recent democratization and transition studies, only Spain was a monarchy. There are also conceptual reasons for the neglect.

Many of the excellent single-country historical accounts of the evolution of monarchies implicitly utilize a two-part typology: “ruling mon-

archies” versus “constitutional monarchies.” This is completely inadequate for the larger comparative study of the full democratization of monarchies. The inadequacy exists because a regime can have a basic law that binds the monarch (thereby making the regime “constitutional”) while remaining undemocratic. In Imperial Germany, the kaiser constitutionally had to govern with a lower house “elected on the basis of universal manhood suffrage, and this legislative assembly enjoyed considerable budgetary powers.”² Yet the regime was nonetheless undemocratic in that the kaiser not only “personally appointed (and dismissed) the chancellor and commanded the Armed Forces but also enjoyed the right to call and dismiss the bicameral federal parliament.”³

We thus propose a three-part ideal-type typology that distinguishes between “ruling monarchy,” “constitutional monarchy,” and what we will call “democratic parliamentary monarchy” (or DPM for short). For us, the defining characteristic of a DPM is that *only* the freely elected parliament forms and terminates the government. In a constitutional monarchy, by contrast, there is a strong element of dual legitimacy in that parliament and the monarch need each other’s support in order to form or terminate a government. In still greater contrast, in ruling monarchies the monarch can often unilaterally form or terminate the government.

Moreover, as our Table spells out, each of these three types comes with its own set of patterns concerning the rule of law, constitutional constraints on the monarch, the status of parliament, and the relative autonomy of the judiciary. The sharp differences between “ruling monarchies,” “constitutional monarchies,” and DPMs that the Table lists should make clear how historically and analytically mistaken it is to conflate DPM with constitutional monarchy. This three-part typology should also help to focus research attention on *boundary changes* between different types of monarchies, in particular on the undertheorized and thus often underdocumented change from constitutional monarchy to DPM.

Often, it seems, this “boundary change” has taken longer to occur than is normally recognized. Britain’s Glorious Revolution (1688–89), led to the deposition of King James II with the help of Parliament and the rapid passage of a Bill of Rights to limit royal powers. Episodes such as this and the widening of suffrage that began with the 1832 Reform Act may leave some with the impression that Britain moved in smooth and linear fashion toward DPM. But a DPM did not actually emerge until after the First World War. In 1885, when Liberal prime minister William Gladstone backed Irish Home Rule, Queen Victoria’s “hostility knew no bounds. She intrigued behind Gladstone’s back, with Whig members of his party, to form a ‘patriotic’ coalition with the Conservatives to defeat Home Rule.”⁴ After reading her grandson George V’s 1914 correspondence, Vernon Bogdanor concludes that there is “no

TABLE—THREE IDEAL TYPES OF MONARCHIES IN MODERN TERRITORIAL STATES

<i>Defining Characteristic of Each Type</i>	Ruling Monarchy	Constitutional Monarchy	Democratic Parliamentary Monarchy
Government Formation and Termination	Monarch forms and terminates government	Formation and termination of government needs support of both the monarch and elected parliament	Only the freely elected parliament forms and terminates government
<i>Associated Set of Patterns Characteristic of Each Type</i>	Ruling Monarchy	Constitutional Monarchy	Democratic Parliamentary Monarchy
Rule of Law	Some legality, some judicial figures, but in many areas monarch not effectively bounded by external laws	Substantial but not complete rule of law governs the monarchy and the polity	Monarchy, government, political society, and civil society are law-bounded
Constitutional Constraints on Monarchy	Power constraints may not yet be constitutionally embedded	Monarch must observe many traditional rules or rules made by parliament, such as in taxation	Reigns but does not rule
Status of Parliament	Some collective body interacts with monarch concerning government, but in most areas monarch is not constrained by parliament	Extensive power sharing between monarchy and parliament including legislative power and appointment of governments	Parliament acting through elected members exercises governing power in name of citizens
Relative Autonomy from Monarchy of the Judiciary and Some Other Bodies	Normally partially appointed and serving at will of monarch	Judges and top civil servants normally appointed by parliamentary government and once appointed enjoy independence from monarch	Monarch cannot unilaterally appoint or dismiss major justices or top civil servants

doubt that the King believed that he could veto legislation, and that he contemplated doing so in the case of [Irish] Home Rule.”⁵ Only the outbreak of the First World War that year averted a major constitutional crisis by taking Home Rule off the agenda for years.

What Helps or Hinders Monarchical Boundary Changes?

For the sake of comparative analysis, can we identify some major variables that contribute to failed or successful transitions to full DPM? Complex historical phenomena always involve many variables, but the following five seem to us to have particular predictive potential when it comes to assessing the conditions that will impede or aid movement toward DPM. These variables are:

1. Political pressure. Without this, most ruling monarchs will stay just that. The greater the political pressure on the monarch to allow a parliament and to negotiate with its party-based elected representatives, and the greater the demands from society and parliament for political power, the more likely it is that the monarch will be forced to become a “constitutional monarch,” and then eventually have to choose between accepting an “exit option” to DPM or being deposed. But other variables may intervene to block such pressures. These include:

2. The monarchical family. The key distinction here is between what we call “small hereditary monarchical families” and “large dynastic ruling families.” In the former, only the monarch tends to hold high state office, thereby making the shift toward constitutionalism and (eventually) DPM likelier to take place than will be the case if there is a large royal family whose members fill senior government posts.⁶ In the latter instance, the family controls major military, financial, and economic resources that furnish both motive and means to guard dynastic prerogatives. In such a case, a monarch who is personally willing to cede powers to a parliament may be blocked by relatives from doing so. A monarch who rules alone, without a battery of kinfolk spread across the commanding heights of state power, will by contrast be more apt to disarm revolutionary threats by acceding to reform, perhaps even to the point of accepting a DPM.

3. Taxes or no taxes? A monarch who needs money—typically at first from “notables” and then from a legislature—is a monarch who is vulnerable. Conversely, a monarch with little or no need to tax (because, say, natural-resource rents fill state coffers) may well be able to fund security services and civic subsidies in amounts large enough to keep the peace and forestall any need to tolerate, much less negotiate with and accommodate, an elected legislature.

4. Ethnic and religious divisions. If the advent of a DPM will mean more power for a previously marginalized ethnic or religious majority and less for the long-dominant minority, the ruling family and its allies

will be more likely to resist. Incentives for accepting a DPM may be stronger, however, if a shift in that direction seems as if it could help to quell threats and ease ethnic or sectarian tensions.

5. *International actors.* A monarch with powerful foreign allies that are hostile to full democratization will be less likely to embrace it, or even to accede to constitutionalism. Yet should the international scene shift in ways that make the monarch's allies less democracy-averse, constitutionalism and even a DPM become more probable.

The West European Experience

All these variables played a role in shaping West European history. Perhaps the most influential—at times working in favor of DPM, and at times against it—was the international climate. This was especially so during two distinct political “moments.” The first was the era of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars (1789–1815). This quarter-century saw the king of France first deposed and then beheaded (in 1793), and later witnessed the rise of territorially based nationalist republics as new claimants to state legitimacy. The era closed with most of Western Europe's traditional royal families regaining their thrones, but at a price: They had to agree to constitutions that constrained some of their powers and changed the source of legitimacy from “divine right” to “the nation.”⁷

A century later came a still more epochal event for all European monarchies: the First World War. This cataclysm saw the destruction of all the major monarchies that entered it with a crowned head owning strong executive powers and ended it on the losing side. The Romanov, Hohenzollern, and Habsburg dynasties all fell (as did that of the Ottomans). Ethnoreligious conflicts, made hotter still by war, had stoked the flames that consumed the multiethnic Czarist and Austro-Hungarian empires. In the nationalist and democratizing climate that came at war's end in 1918, separate Austrian, Czechoslovak, Hungarian, and South Slavic republics rose from the ashes of Habsburg rule.⁸ Russia's Czarist regime had teetered before a grave revolutionary challenge in 1905, and a decade later found itself overwhelmed by the hardships of prolonged mass combat and a welter of demands emanating from Poland, Ukraine, the Baltic region, the Caucasus, and Bessarabia.⁹

Problems related to ethnicity and religion also loomed large in some of Europe's surviving monarchies. There was the Irish question in the United Kingdom, of course, and a lesser-known but explosive ethnonational matter in Denmark. The Danes had adopted a relatively liberal constitution in 1849, but not until 1901 did King Christian IX agree to form a government that would have the confidence of the elected national legislature's lower house. In 1919, his grandson Christian X formally declared that he would not form any government without a lower-house majority. But just

a year later, he violated the spirit of this pledge. The Treaty of Versailles called for Germany and Denmark to hold plebiscites in North and Central Schleswig, respectively (areas that Denmark had lost to Prussia in an 1864 war). North Schleswig voted overwhelmingly to rejoin Denmark, while in Central Schleswig the result was the reverse. Christian X sided with Danish nationalists and ordered the premier to ignore the Central Schleswig vote and claim the area for Denmark. When the premier said no, the king sacked him and his cabinet.

This last great clash between a Danish monarch and parliament ended only when the king, worried by protesting crowds in Copenhagen and the example of the Bolshevik takeover in Russia, accepted parliament's right to be the final authority on public policy. No Danish monarch has since dared to challenge a prime minister heading a parliamentary majority. Denmark had finally become a DPM.

In Sweden, too, the specter of revolution played a role in DPM's rise. The Kingdom of Sweden had been growing increasingly constitutionalized since early in the nineteenth century, yet it did not become a DPM until after the First World War. In his classic study of the emergence of Swedish democracy, Dankwart Rustow notes that when the leader of the lower house asked King Oscar II to dissolve it so that a vote could be held on widening the suffrage and curtailing the veto powers of the less democratically elected upper house, he "flatly refused."¹⁰ It was only in the threatening context of 1918—when the German and Russian monarchs had fallen and Swedes were protesting on behalf of republicanism and even revolution—that Oscar's son King Gustaf V acceded to universal manhood suffrage in both houses and thus, in Rustow's judgment, at last accepted "parliamentary cabinet government" (that is, a DPM).

The Arab World's Experience

Two factors have been crucial in shoring up the Arab world's authoritarian monarchies: One is the vast size and the great political power of the royal family; the other is the relative absence of taxation. In sharp contrast, by the nineteenth century in Western Europe's monarchies, only the crowned head (or a close relative acting as regent) held major state office, and primogeniture was the accepted rule of succession.¹¹ This cut off any prospect of the intrafamily rivalries, feuds, and power struggles that have so often troubled the large ruling clans of the Middle East and North Africa, where the king or perhaps his extended family can choose the successor and where royals have a group interest in blocking the rise of a freely elected parliament that chooses the prime minister.

Then there is the factor of taxation, or more precisely the presence or absence of the need for it. No European monarchy has been a rentier state—all have had to levy taxes, with all the pressures for cooperation between crown and parliament that this implies. Of today's eight Arab

monarchies, by contrast, all save Jordan and Morocco are petrostates in which oil money obviates the need to tax citizens while giving rulers ample means to control society through subsidies and coercion. The need to tax is a force favoring DPM that has been mostly absent in the Middle East but long present in Europe. If they survived war and ethnic conflict, European monarchies—with their taxation requirements and their lack of large and politically potent royal families—became subject to pro-DPM political pressures, as the Danish and Swedish cases illustrate.

Regimes with sultanistic features—Muammar Qadhafi's Libya or Bashar al-Assad's Syria—have no peaceful "exit option." A serious challenge will end in the ruler's death or, should the ruler manage to hang on, a polity torn by civil war. Partition or its *de facto* equivalent becomes a possible near-term outcome; democracy does not.¹² Constitutional monarchies, by contrast, have DPM as an exit option. In this scenario, the monarch ceases to rule but continues to reign and the shift is orderly, with royal persons, prestige, and property remaining intact. The monarchy lives on as a symbol of the nation, its traditions, and its unity. There is no civil war and no time when the "stateness" of the country is in doubt. Democracy looms as a credible prospect.

Why has no Arab monarch ever chosen this option?¹³ It cannot be because Islam and democracy are incompatible—more than three-hundred million people live in Muslim-majority countries that are at least electoral democracies (Indonesia, Turkey, Senegal, and Albania).¹⁴

Morocco

Perhaps our five variables will help to shed light on the question. Our opening contrast will be between the country that we argue has the most supportive (but, as of this writing, still quite insufficient) conditions for a DPM, namely Morocco, and the major country with the least supportive conditions, namely Saudi Arabia. (Three small Gulf monarchies, Oman, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates, we pass over for space reasons and because it would be redundant given that their values on our five key variables are essentially the same as Saudi Arabia's.)

Morocco is geographically close to Spain (numerous Moroccan citizens have worked there) and has more knowledge than anyplace else in the Arab world of the Spanish democratic transition. Moroccans watch Spanish television. King Mohammed VI is personally close to King Juan Carlos of Spain and knows well the different fates of the Spanish and Greek monarchies.

Doubted at first by some because he had been appointed by Franco, Juan Carlos strengthened his throne by publicly defending democracy against the brief attempted putsch of 23 February 1981. In Greece, by contrast, his cousin King Constantine had sided with the colonels' coup of 1967 only to see the monarchy abolished via plebiscite after the res-

toration of democracy in 1974. Were a king of Morocco ever to face a crisis, it would seem to be in his best interest to emulate Juan Carlos rather than Constantine. Might a crisis be a possible path to a DPM in Morocco?

If circumstances arise in which key actors judge that they cannot allow an unpopular and ineffective monarch to keep ruling but also feel that ending the monarchy altogether is a bad move, the creation of a DPM may emerge as the most viable “exit option.”

There are unique aspects of the Moroccan monarchy that might be conducive to either a democratic opposition, if it were ready to rule, or a threatened monarchy utilizing such an exit option from crisis. Considered “Commanders of the Faithful” and direct descendants of Muhammad, the kings of Morocco combine charismatic with procedural legitimacy.¹⁵ They have more personal prestige than Gulf monarchs. Mohammed VI added to his reformist credentials in 2006 when he worked with a coalition of femi-

nists and moderate Islamists to secure the Moroccan Parliament’s unanimous passage of the Arab world’s most progressive family code aside from Tunisia’s.¹⁶ A shift toward DPM would likely see him retain much of his prestige and influence as well as some valuable prerogatives.

Morocco’s larger political arc also features some positive components. Unlike in Saudi Arabia, elections, parties, and Parliament are significant. The Socialists recently served an entire term as Parliament’s leading party. The current prime minister comes from the Party for Justice and Development (PJD), a formation with Islamist roots that emerged from the November 2011 election as Parliament’s largest single party. It aspires to be known as a moderate Muslim ruling party along the lines of groups that have claimed this identity in Turkey (the Turkish Justice and Development Party) and Tunisia (Ennahda).

The “Arab Spring” reached Morocco in the form of the 20 February 2011 protests. The demonstrations, now called M20, occurred in 53 towns and were the largest in Morocco’s history. Unfortunately for the chances of an advance toward democratization, writes leading analyst Ahmed Benchemsi (the now-exiled former editor of the major Moroccan weekly *TelQuel*), “Feb[ruary] 20 never was an extension of established political parties or civil society organizations. On the contrary: Its leaders always insisted on their independence vis-à-vis established political groups.”¹⁷

In our judgment, it was a grave mistake for M20 to call for constitutional changes without also demanding free and fair elections for a constituent assembly. This allowed the king to seize the initiative. In a major speech on March 9, Mohammed VI proposed changing the constitution to

make it explicit that, after an election, the largest parliamentary party is the first one that the monarch must ask to form a government. He also proposed that Amazigh, the traditional tongue of the Berbers, the largest and from time to time the most restive ethnic minority in Morocco (Berbers were well represented in M20), receive recognition as an official state language. A hastily convened July 2011 referendum overwhelmingly approved all the royal proposals and made them part of the constitution.

Where does Morocco stand now, three years after the February 2011 protests and the king's constitutional changes, when viewed in light of our Table? A close analysis of what the referendum did and did not change makes it clear that Morocco is certainly *not* a DPM, or even moving in that direction. A DPM's defining characteristic, let us recall, is that "*only* the freely elected parliament forms and terminates the government." In Morocco, the king neither has given up his power to choose who heads the key ministries (Defense, Interior, Foreign Affairs, Justice, and Religion), nor is under much pressure to do so.

Indeed, contends Benchemsi, the new constitution, drafted by the king's advisors, contains sufficient ambiguities and loopholes that the king still *de facto* "appoints the prime minister and cabinet members at will, has the power to dissolve parliament for any reason, and controls the judiciary personnel who render justice in his name."¹⁸ The royal *makhzen* (palace network) also wields excessive influence and power in a way that is completely incompatible with DPM.

At present, prospects for heightened political pressure appear dimmer than they seemed three years ago. Many unemployed young people continue to choose "exit" over "voice": At least a tenth of Morocco's populace works abroad, mostly in Europe. Much of the country's business class feels comfortable with the king, seeing him as relatively competent, legitimate, and (most significantly) safe in light of their interests.

Nonetheless, some analysts speculate that the lack of change may lead to an explosion. Such an explosion (like those in Russia and Germany after the First World War or Iran in 1978) would of course render any DPM "exit option" moot by destroying the monarchy.

Were the king to come under intense pressure to let others attempt to rule more efficiently and democratically, however, there remains the conceptual and empirical possibility that such pressure might end up stripping him of power, but leaving him (or his constitutionally designated successor, his ten-year-old son) as a reigning but not a ruling monarch. In effect, then, Morocco would become a DPM.

In his otherwise critical discussion of Mohammed VI, Benchemsi argues that during the Arab Spring, Tunisians and Egyptians called for the ouster of their respective heads of state, but:

Moroccan activists could not raise such a sharp demand. There are three main reasons for this. First, the Moroccan monarchy has a deep legiti-

macy, rooted in twelve centuries of history. Second, the current king, as undemocratic as he may be, has not stifled his people or behaved tyrannically enough to give [rise] to a general revolutionary sentiment among his subjects. Finally, Moroccans widely credit the monarchy for holding the ethnically and culturally diverse population together. Were this symbol of unity to disappear, they rightly or wrongly believe, the nation would fall apart and dissolve into bloody sectarian conflicts. Whatever their convictions and ideology, Morocco's activists are well aware that calling for the monarchy's demise would alienate the great majority of their followers. . . . Removing the king is not a viable option."¹⁹

But if circumstances ever arise in which key actors judge that they cannot allow an unpopular and ineffective monarch to keep ruling but also feel that ending the monarchy altogether is a bad move, the creation of a DPM may emerge as the most viable "exit option." Yet this option will only be chosen if, over the next decade or so, Morocco's political parties (like those in Western Europe a century or more ago) can begin to act like a credible "government in waiting." If we assume that this could happen—and right now that is a big assumption—then it could become highly relevant that Morocco's conditions are much more potentially "facilitating," in light of our five key variables, than conditions in any other Arab monarchy.

Morocco's royal family is small and not especially powerful. Mohammed VI has just one brother (who holds no state post other than a pair of nominal military ranks) and one ten-year-old son. Michael Herb asserts categorically that in Morocco the king's relatives "do not maintain any sort of monopoly over the key cabinet posts."²⁰ In Saudi Arabia, by contrast, there may be as many as seven-thousand princes, and senior figures among them run the key ministries of state. The founder of the current regime, Ibn Saud (1876–1953), had 22 wives and 45 sons. Most of his sons, too, had many wives and many sons. Since Ibn Saud's death more than sixty years ago, every Saudi king has been one of his sons, including the current occupant of the throne, 89-year-old Abdullah. The heir-apparent, Abdullah's 78-year-old half-brother Prince Salman, is also Saudi Arabia's first deputy premier and defense minister. "The extended royal family," writes a journalistic observer, "is said to include roughly thirty thousand members" who control nearly all important state posts.²¹

As regards the taxation variable, Herb classifies Morocco and Jordan as the only Arab monarchies that are not rentier states. The Saudi state floats on a sea of oil money and citizens pay no personal income tax. Morocco has a progressive tax structure that reaches 38 percent at the top level of income. With its need to tax its citizens, the Moroccan monarchy has a classic point of contact for striking bargains with society of the sort that furthered democracy in Western Europe. There is no such contact point in Saudi Arabia.

On the ethnic and religious variable, the king of Morocco is “Commander of the Faithful” and so has ties with the *ulama*, but he, or his successor, would have a much greater degree of freedom to opt for a DPM than does the Saudi king, whose family is locked in a long-term alliance with powerful fundamentalist groups such as the Wahhabis.²²

Finally we come to the international variable. Morocco’s key allies are France, Spain, and the United States. It seems safe to predict that, should internal conditions ever become ripe for a move toward DPM, these three powers would support it.

Kuwait

Aside from Morocco, the Arab monarchy that before the Arab Spring seemed best positioned to change in the direction of a DPM was Kuwait’s. This Gulf emirate started on the path away from absolutism and toward the beginnings of constitutional monarchy during the first half of the twentieth century—well before Morocco did. The reason was taxes. For much of the nineteenth century, coastal merchants so dominated Kuwaiti affairs that the ruling Sabah family could not collect any levies, and had to rely instead on the merchants’ “voluntary donations . . . made in explicit exchange for services rendered.”²³ In 1938, the merchants created a *majlis* (parliament) and used it to raise money (in the form of customs duties) for civic improvements, a police force, and “the foundations for the modern Kuwaiti state.”²⁴

The Sabahs eventually clawed back many powers, but as Michael Herb notes, to this day “Kuwait holds generally free and fair parliamentary elections with near universal adult suffrage for citizens.”²⁵ F. Gregory Gause, a close student of the country, notes that “The Kuwaiti parliament can remove ministers, even the prime minister, from office. In every case so far, either the minister has resigned before the vote or the whole cabinet has resigned.”²⁶ Indeed, since 2006, ongoing societal and parliamentary pressures have “compelled the emir to dissolve his appointed government. . . . no fewer than ten times and to hold new legislative elections five times.”²⁷

As impressive as this might seem, it has not been enough to propel Kuwait into DPM status. The problem is not ethnic or religious conflict or unhelpful allies. Amaney Jamal argues that militant Islam in Kuwait (unlike in most Arab countries) is not threatening enough to cause either the domestic middle class or powerful allies such as the United States to oppose democratization.²⁸ The problem is the size of the ruling family and the key offices it holds. The emir is the head of state. He appoints a member of the family to be the prime minister, and the emir’s and the prime minister’s relatives always fill all the cabinet’s “power portfolios,” enabling them to block any move toward making Kuwait a DPM.²⁹

Things might be different were the opposition able to generate a coherent, overwhelming parliamentary majority, but such has not been the case. Moreover, “no organized group in Kuwait expresses a desire to overthrow the monarchy, or to employ violence to change the status quo. There is in Kuwait today no threat of a revolution from the armed forces, from political Islam, nor from any other quarter.”³⁰ The explanation for this state of affairs may be found in two words: “oil” and “taxes.” Kuwait has a lot of the former, and few of the latter.

To describe Kuwait as a petrostate is an understatement. It exports three times more oil per resident than does its larger neighbor, Saudi Arabia. From 1972 to 1999, Kuwait exceeded every one of the world’s other rentier states in the share of government revenue (88 percent) accounted for by sales of its main natural resource.³¹ Like Saudi Arabia, Kuwait has no personal income tax—indeed, taxes of any kind barely exist—so there is little worry about tax protests as a source of demands for political change. Protests do occur, but they are over matters such as voting systems and parliamentary dissolutions.

Thanks to the oil industry and the wealth it brings, unemployment is low by regional standards and citizens enjoy a variety of state subsidies. Two-thirds of all residents are noncitizens. They make less than citizens, but are still well paid by world standards. Herb plausibly argues that these demographic circumstances are a big reason why pressure for basic political change is so low on the part of citizens and noncitizens alike. In Herb’s judgment, the members of the ruling Sabah family “protect citizens from a (potential) democracy of the noncitizen majority and protect noncitizens from a democracy of the citizen minority. On this basis is built a durable authoritarianism.”³²

Bahrain

During the 1990s and into the early 2000s, the monarch of Bahrain faced a simmering crisis that impelled him to make concessions to constitutionalism for fear of losing his throne. A decade later, no Arab monarchy came under greater pressure from the Arab Spring than did Bahrain’s. In the October 2010 lower-house election, held shortly *before* the first protests erupted in Tunisia, opposition forces drawn from across Bahrain’s sectarian lines (the largest group was the Shia Islamist al-Wifaq party, but there were Sunnis in opposition ranks too) won 18 or 19 of the 40 seats despite extensive gerrymandering designed to prevent a Shia seat majority. When the monarchy blocked reform measures that called for curbing the veto power of the tiny island kingdom’s appointed upper house, securing greater lower-house influence over cabinet appointments, and using more state resources to benefit Bahrain’s Shia majority, the opposition took to the streets.

At their height, the Pearl Roundabout protests of early 2011 are

thought to have involved one of every five Bahraini citizens—making them the Arab Spring’s largest in proportional terms. In 2001, the king had pledged to institute a constitutional monarchy with separation of powers. Early in the 2011 uprising, the king named his son the crown prince—a figure with a conciliatory reputation—to negotiate some changes. Had the king acceded to the reform demands that came to a head a decade after that 2001 pledge, Bahrain would have taken a major step forward toward DPM. Instead there was a major step back toward absolutism, with a violent crackdown leading the way.

In order to grasp why things went so wrong in Bahrain, it helps to look at the other four variables beside political pressure (which was plentiful). Together, the four created negative conditions that pro-DPM pressure could not overcome. The Khalifas, Bahrain’s dynastic ruling family, come from the Sunni minority. The same hard-line, Saudi-aligned family member—he is the current Bahraini king’s uncle—has been prime minister since 1970. He opposed the reform movement and the protests, in both of which Shias figured prominently. With the king’s backing, Khalifa relatives fill nearly half the 25 cabinet posts and head every one of the power ministries. There have been relatively few cabinet ministers from Bahrain’s Shia majority; certainly none has ever held a power portfolio. The security establishment is firmly in royal and Sunni hands; its commander (another Khalifa) was one of those in ruling circles who argued for repression and against accommodation.³³

As for our “tax or no tax?” variable, the amount of state revenue that Bahrain receives from income taxes is zero. As of the start of 2010, the government drew four-fifths of its funds from oil, most of which came from a field under Saudi administration. Nearby Saudi Arabia—like Bahrain, a Sunni monarchy—is by far Bahrain’s most important ally. With the assent of most of the Khalifas, Saudi Arabia sent a thousand well-armed troops over the causeway into Bahrain to prevent either of two scenarios that Riyadh loathes: a Shia-led revolution or a DPM. Thus did a large dynastic family, sectarian tensions, and dependence on a reform-averse ally combine to thwart movement toward a DPM in Bahrain.

Jordan

Jordan, like Morocco, stands out among the Arab monarchies owing to its lack of a large dynastic ruling family. Like Morocco, Jordan is nearly bereft of oil deposits and requires its citizens to pay taxes on, among other things, their personal incomes. The country must live within the tight limits of straitened resources: Prodded by the International Monetary Fund, King Abdullah II has reluctantly cut various subsidies offered to the populace and trimmed state payrolls while raising gasoline taxes. These austerity measures have been painful enough that even the Bedouin tribes in the south, long rock-solid backers of the Hashemite monarchy, have rioted.

If we look at the background of 52-year-old King Abdullah, we might think that he would consider responding to these pressures with some variant of the DPM formula that he knows so well thanks to his extensive personal and educational ties with Britain and the United States. In interviews he is dismissive of “absolute monarchies,” though he remains free to fire prime ministers and can dissolve the partly elected National Assembly as he sees fit.³⁴ In 2011, he wrote: “Jordan’s future dictates that we move forward with democratization to ensure that all Jordanians feel they have a larger say in their government.” Yet he quickly cited as a barrier to such progress “the terrible regional situation, which often poses challenges that make security and stability the priorities.”³⁵

In our terms, what he was talking about is the interactive effect of three variables—ethnic divisions, political pressure, and international actors—that are much less DPM-friendly in Jordan’s case than they are in Morocco’s. Like Bahrain, Jordan displays an old and sharp cleavage between a palace-favored minority (in this case the East Banker, mainly tribal, part of the populace) and a majority (in this case, those with roots in the West Bank of the Jordan River, who are mainly Palestinian). In September 1970, Abdullah’s father King Hussein used the (mostly tribal) Royal Jordanian Army to defend his throne. In the 1970–71 civil war, it was the armed presence of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) in Jordan that sparked the conflict. Jordan had lost the West Bank to Israel in 1967. In 1970–71, the Jordanian army drove the PLO guerrilla units out of Jordan and into Lebanon.

In this context of grave ethnic cleavage, Abdullah II has continued the custom of keeping West Bankers out of most major state-security posts. The king has also condoned gerrymandering in order to overrepresent East Bankers and underrepresent West Bankers in the lower house. Thus winning a seat in heavily Palestinian Amman takes four times the votes that are typically needed in tribal strongholds such as the southern cities of Karak, Tafila, and Ma’an. The palace has also played a role in crafting an electoral system based on the Single Non-Transferable Vote (SNTV), which is used nowhere else in the world save Afghanistan. The system favors the winning of seats by individual leaders (in Jordan, these are often tribal figures) and makes the formation of large party coalitions among Palestinians difficult.³⁶ The electoral-law status quo precludes fair representation for Jordan’s ethnic-Palestinian majority, and in doing so gives the non-Palestinian East Bankers reason *not* to press for democratic reforms that could place them under the rule of a hostile majority.

Turning to the international-actors variable, one notes immediately that Jordan sits in a strategic—and vulnerable—geopolitical position bordering Israel, the Palestinian Authority, Syria, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and Egypt. In 1994, Jordan became the only Arab-majority country other than Egypt to recognize and sign a peace treaty with Israel. After having received 420,000 Iraqi refugees over the last decade, Jordan (whose

citizens number only about five million) is now dealing with Syrian war refugees who are thought to number about half a million. Jordanian officials publicly warn that Islamist militants have likely infiltrated Jordan by blending into these masses of displaced persons. In view of this, neither the United States nor the European Union, Amman's two major allies, have been inclined to push hard for a DPM. Meanwhile, the value placed on Jordan's role as a source of stability in a vital yet unstable region has led to the country's being the third-highest recipient of U.S. foreign aid per capita (based on figures for 2011), trailing only Israel and Afghanistan. Along with this material support, both Washington and Brussels lend frequent ideological support in the form of praise for King Abdullah's "modernizing" and "democratizing" reforms.

Given all this, where does Jordan map onto our Table? Abdullah is not presiding over anything near a DPM. Even after the 2011 constitutional reforms that make up the palace's response to the Arab Spring—a royal commission drew them up before parliament approved them—the upper house remains entirely appointed by the king (Article 36) and wields a veto over the lower house (Article 91). The king has said that he plans—in a first for Jordan—to consult the legislature before naming a prime minister. (Ten men, all of them nonparty "independents," have held the post at Abdullah's behest since he began his reign in February 1999.) Yet royal avowals notwithstanding, the 2011 Constitution still says that "the King appoints the Prime Minister and may dismiss him" (Article 35), and that "the King may dissolve the Chamber of Deputies" (Article 34).

Even if it is not a DPM, is Jordan democratizing? Not if "democratizing" means that political rights are improving. From 1991 through 1994, Jordan's Freedom House score on political rights (with 1 being the best score and 7 the worst) averaged 3.8. Yet for the most recent four-year period, 2010 through 2013, Jordan's average for political rights had deteriorated to an abysmal 6.0, which is well into what Freedom House calls "not free" territory and puts the country into the same bracket with Iran, Afghanistan, Algeria, Cambodia, and four other Arab monarchies (Bahrain, Oman, Qatar, and the UAE—Saudi Arabia receives a worst-possible rating of 7.0).

One of the last questions we asked Juan Linz, while working on this essay together only three days before his death on 1 October 2013, was what he considered some of the implications for Arab countries of this article that we had almost finished. Ever the political analyst who explored possibilities, Linz answered: "The creation of a DPM always took a long time. The people should keep trying, create more political pressures."

NOTES

1. On the dearth of comparative studies that focus on monarchy, see Juli F. Minoves, "Monarchy, a Democratic Paradox: The Head of State in European Parliamentary Democracies" (PhD diss., Yale University, 2011), 3; and Michael Herb, "Princes and Parliaments in the Arab World," *Middle East Journal* 58 (Summer 2004): 369.

2. W.M. Spellman, *Monarchies: 1000–2000* (London: Reaktion, 2001), 217.

3. Spellman, *Monarchies*, 217.

4. Vernon Bogdanor, *The Monarchy and the Constitution* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 32.

5. Bogdanor, *The Monarchy and the Constitution*, 131. See also 316, where Bogdanor notes that King George V at this time was pondering not only vetoing the Irish home-rule bill but sacking the cabinet too.

6. Michael Herb, *All in the Family: Absolutism, Revolution, and Democracy in the Middle Eastern Monarchies* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1999), esp. chs. 1, 2, 9, and 10.

7. Minoves, "Monarchy, a Democratic Paradox," 25–28.

8. On nationalist issues in Austria-Hungary, see Robin Okey, *The Habsburg Monarchy c. 1765–1918: From Enlightenment to Eclipse* (New York: St. Martin's, 2001), 283–309.

9. Hugh Seton-Watson, *The Decline of Imperial Russia, 1855–1914* (London: Methuen, 1952), 231–45.

10. Dankwart A. Rustow, *The Politics of Compromise: A Study of Parties and Cabinet Government in Sweden* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1955), 68. See also Nils Andrén, *Modern Swedish Government* (Stockholm: Almqvist and Wiksell, 1961), 105; and Raymond Fusilier, *Les monarches parlementaires* (Paris: Editions Ouvrières, 1960), 79 and 200.

11. Max Weber, *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*, vol. 1 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), 247–48. He asserts that primogeniture "has greatly facilitated the consolidation of political groups in that it has eliminated struggle between a plurality of candidates from the same charismatic family."

12. On the sultanistic features of Libya and Syria and the closing off of peaceful exit options there, see Alfred Stepan and Juan J. Linz, "Democratization Theory and the 'Arab Spring,'" *Journal of Democracy* 24 (April 2013): 26–28.

13. See Sean L. Yom and F. Gregory Gause III, "Resilient Royals: How Arab Monarchies Hang On," *Journal of Democracy* 23 (October 2012): 74–88.

14. Alfred Stepan, "Rituals of Respect: Sufis and Secularists in Senegal in Comparative Perspective" *Comparative Politics* 44 (July 2012): 390–91.

15. Elbaki Hermassi, *Leadership and National Development in North Africa: A Comparative Study* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972), 45 and 71.

16. Katie Zoglin, "Morocco's Family Code: Improving Equality for Women," *Human Rights Quarterly* 31 (November 2009): 964–84.

17. Ahmed Benchemsi, "Morocco's Makhzen and the Haphazard Activists," in Lina Khatib and Ellen Lust, eds., *Taking to The Streets: The Transformation of Arab Activism* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2014), 206.

18. Benchemsi, "Morocco's Makhzen and the Haphazard Activists," 206.
19. Benchemsi, "Morocco's Makhzen and the Haphazard Activists," 224–25.
20. Michael Herb, *All in the Family*, 222.
21. Karen Elliot House, *On Saudi Arabia: Its People, Past, Religion, Fault Lines—and Future* (New York: Vintage, 2012), 125.
22. For a knowledgeable and less sanguine analysis, see Ahmed Benchemsi, "Morocco: Outfoxing the Opposition," *Journal of Democracy* 23 (January 2012): 57–69.
23. Herb, *All in the Family*, 69.
24. Herb, *All in the Family*, 72.
25. Michael Herb, "A Nation of Bureaucrats: Political Participation and Economic Diversification in Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 41 (August 2009): 379.
26. Private communication with F. Gregory Gause, January 2014.
27. Yom and Gause, "Resilient Royals," 79.
28. Amaney Jamal, *Of Empires and Citizens: Pro-American Democracy or No Democracy at All?* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012), 89–102.
29. Regarding the ruling family's six-decades-and-counting lock on Kuwait's key state posts, see Herb, *All in the Family*, 80 and 85, Figures 4.6 and 4.7.
30. Herb, *All in the Family*, 158.
31. See Michael Herb, "No Representation Without Taxation? Rents, Development, and Democracy," *Comparative Politics* 37 (April 2005): 299, Table 3.
32. Herb, "A Nation of Bureaucrats," 392.
33. On Bahrain, see Lin Noueihed and Alex Warren, *The Battle for the Arab Spring: Revolution, Counter-Revolution and the Making of a New Era* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012), 135–63.
34. The quotes are from his interview with Jeffrey Goldberg, "The Modern King in the Arab Spring," *Atlantic*, April 2013.
35. For these quotes, see King Abdullah II of Jordan, *Our Last Best Chance: The Pursuit of Peace in a Time of Peril* (New York: Viking, 2011), xvii and 174–75.
36. Ellen Lust-Okar, "Reinforcing Informal Institutions Through Authoritarian Elections: Insights from Jordan," *Middle East Law and Governance* 1, no. 1 (2009): 3–37.