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ABSTRACT

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Subject

The "Arab Spring" as a factor of institution of state's transformation by the example of the Republic of Tunisia, the Arab Republic of Egypt and the Syrian Arab Republic: Comparative analysis

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## ABSTRACT

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## I. GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE WORK

**Relevance of research.** The determining component of political systems is a political institution. Quick development of the political-comparative analysis in the twentieth century allowed a deep studying of political institutions in numerous countries of the World. However, Middle East region remains one of the least studied ones, thus analysis of political institutions of Middle Eastern countries receives higher relevance day by day. The relevance grows due to a number of reasons, including historical, resource, personnel, language, scientific ones, etc.

The development of comparative political science involves the gradual expansion of the number of countries and regions, which become the objects of research. The situation began to change after the tragic events of the 11<sup>th</sup> of September in the United States. Another impetus to the Middle East study has been done by the need to accumulate knowledge in the field of security. And absolutely new level of Middle Eastern researches has been reached exactly nowadays, namely after the events of Arab Spring, that have taken place in many countries of the region.

In the context of globalization one of the most important matters is security. Middle East region is one of the least stable in the international system, as it faced military actions and the emergence as well as development of terrorist organizations. Sharp contradictions between secular regimes and fundamentalist Islamism may be noticed. They were specteted in ideological, political and practical spheres during the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Fundamentalism is skeptic about the feasibility of using Western models: both institutional and behavioral ones.

Such background has led to the formation of the problem: how the political institutions are being formed in states of the region and if they correspond to patterns common in democratic countries? To what extent, the conceptual provisions of the modernization theory can be interpreted as universal one? Is it capable to function in accordance with the matrix, established in the western countries? In addition, Arab Spring brought about a greater openness of political systems in some countries, and the institutional component has become substantially transformed.

An additional feature of the region is in the fact that various forms of government are represented here. This diversity implies variability, pluralism of political activities. Despite the countries studies haven't been the monarchies, all the models of neighboring absolute monarchies might have been found in them before Arab Spring. The authoritarian nature of the regimes used to be common for Tunisia, Egypt and Syria. Numerous attempts of democratization were not successful enough during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Thus, the study of changing standards at political institutions in the result of Arab Spring in the countries selected for makes this dissertation are especially relevant.

Three countries, which experienced events of Arab Spring, have been selected for studying. They are three models of the results' level after revolutionary events in the course of Arab Spring. Namely, these are successful model (Tunisia), retarded model (Egypt) and a failed one (Syria). Thus, Republic of Tunisia, the Arab Republic of Egypt and the Syrian Arab Republic were chosen for the research. All of them experienced or still is getting experience of the Arab Spring events; however their consequences turned out to be highly different in the selected countries. Thus, in Tunisia, the Arab Spring led to a change in the form of government, (presidential-parliamentary). Egypt faced two revolutions, however after a brief governing by former opposition, the regime of the militants returned to power. Unfortunately, Arab Spring has become an impetus for a long civil war and millions of victims in Syria. Choiseof these countries wasn't accidental. It has been made due to the contrast between the outcomes of revolutionary events, with seemingly similar starting positions (all countries were republics with rather strong authoritarian leaders, similar economic indicators, etc.). Gathered information allows to make general conclusions and to create models that may be extrapolated to other countries in the Middle East region. Generalization of the conclusion has a great importance, as it may prevent possible tragic events and exaggerating number of victims during and after the protest actions in the case of unpredictable conflict scenarios.

The choice of Tunisia, Egypt and Syria has been also influenced by the *geopolitical state* of these countries and their resource potential, because they were

characterized by positive demographic indicators, tourist and human resource perspectives. They have wide ethno-political and religious-confessional palettes. Syria owns energy reserves, while Egypt and Tunisia have transit prospects. In view of this, all countries have a *significant influence* on the political space of the Middle East region.

An important factor that predetermined topic's choice is the rather slow development of Middle Eastern studies in general and Arab Spring particularly in the Eastern Europe. The Arab Spring is a process that has just recently come to its end in some countries, and but still is considered to be ongoing in Syria. Therefore, there are few scientific and theoretical researches on this subject; most of the sources are based on media reports and new legislative norms. They are also useful for this paper. However, the depth of work and the high degree of generalization could become a positive contribution to the methodological basis of Middle Eastern comparative studies.

As the international relations with Tunisia, Egypt and Syria (both from foreign countries in the format of bilateral or tripartite relations, and these countries among themselves) are still in the process of getting tighter, the study of political institutions of these countries is a step towards their strengthening. Thus, we can say that these three models of the Arab Spring events are one way or another in other Arab countries.

The theoretical base of the dissertation may be divided onto three main groups. These are researches by the Western scholars (Americans and West-Europeans), Eastern scientists (From Israel and Arab countries), as well as Eastern-European theorists (Bulgarian, Russian and from Post-Soviet countries). The theoretical researches by Western scholars D. Iston and G. Almond, the theorists of political systems, became the basis and source for the research of political institutions in Egypt, Tunisia and Syria. The works by M. Dogan and D. Pelassi, who substantiated the necessity of using the method of concrete cases (case-studies) during the political-comparative analysis were also used. Studies by J. Esposito, R. Dahl and A. Przeworski on democratization issues have become the methodological basis of our

study. P. Merkl's, "Modern Comparative Politics" substantiated the behavioral approach in comparative studies. It was particularly useful during analysis of political behavior of state rulers in Egypt, Tunisia and Syria. The writings by S. Huntington are especially appreciated, since the civilization approach has become crucial in the consideration of Islamic civilization and Ummah, as well as Sharia law. The theory of modernization was equally important in the course of the research.

The theoretical basis of the dissertation research is also based on the works by the Arab scholars. Especially useful were the works of E. Said, who substantiated the ideological mistakes of Orientalism. A. Ibragimi, M. Tegrarian, L. Fawaz, have revealed the peculiarities of the democratic process in the Middle East and the difficulties with which it faces, etc. Particular importance to this study was in legal documents of Tunisia, Egypt and Syria adopted either before the events of the Arab Spring or after them.

The writings by work Israeli scientists are also useful for this study due to consideration of some local peculiarities. Initial scientific principles for the study of the political systems of the Arab Republic of Egypt, the Republic of Tunisia and the Syrian Arab Republic were the writings by Bulgarian scholars and scientists from post-Soviet space. In particular, the methodological work by such comparativists as M. Sapronova, I. Zhdanov, Y. Golubchikov, R. Silantiev and others played an important role for this dissertation.

Thus, the problem of Middle East studies and the political systems of its individual states has become especially relevant among the scholars around the world. However, there is still a fairly small amount of actual informative, analytical, political and comparative works on the transformation of political institutions in a result of the Arab Spring. Thus, our dissertation might make a contribution to the Middle East research process and serve as a research base for further scientific developments. It also has practical results for forming of bilateral relations between the EU and renewed Tunisia, Egypt, and, in a prospect, democratic Syria.

**Connection of the work with scientific programs, plans, themes.** The dissertation was written in accordance with the planned research topics of the specialty "comparative political science" within the scientific complex "The political process in the conditions of transformation: the World experience".

**The purpose and objectives** of the study are to analyze the state and the main trends of political institutions' formation and transition in Tunisia, Egypt and Syria in a result of the Arab Spring events; singling out of the common and distinctive features of the political institutions in these countries; ascertaining the correct use of "political institution" and "political system" developed as models on the basis of western democratic countries' experience.

**Achievement of the set goal foresees solving of the following tasks:**

1. Analysis of the pre-revolutionary political institutions of Egypt and Tunisia as well as pre-war political institutions of Syria, namely the institutes of the head of state, government, parliament, political and civic unions on the basis of theoretical and methodological foundations' of political systems and neo-institutionalism.

2. Studying of the preconditions, external causes, course and achievements of the Arab Spring processes in Tunisia, Egypt and Syria.

3. Finding out of the essence of Arab Spring events: its origin, peculiarities, and readiness of the societies of selected countries to democratic transition before Arab Spring.

4. Identification of the multi-ethnicity specialties in Syrian Arab Republic and determination of Kurdish national minority's role in the process of establishment of democratic Syria and the fight against terrorism.

5. Studying of political values peculiarities in the political life of Tunisia, Egypt and Syria and their influence on the Arab Spring.

6. Singling out of the common and distinctive features of political institutions in Tunisia, Egypt and Syria.

**The object** of the study is a number of political institutes of Republic of Tunisia, Arab Republic of Egypt and the Syrian Arab Republic before and after the Arab Spring processes.

**The subject** of the study is the definition of the essence and transformation of the political institutions of Tunisia, Egypt and Syria in a result of the revolutionary events of the Arab Spring.

**Methodological basis of the study.** The research is based on the scientific principles of objectivity and complexity. The objective and tasks of the research need use of general and specific methods of political science, sociology and general philosophical methods.

The basic method is a *comparative political analysis*. Specific cases (case study in the analysis of individuals, radical organizations and other non-institutional actors of political systems, as well as individual episodes and events of the Arab Spring) were used in its frames. Also *country-studies* (during studying of selected peculiarities, such as demographic, anthropological, statistical characteristics, etc.) were chosen. *Binary analysis* was highly important during comparison of political institutions and systems of three selected countries. *Behavioral method* was used in analyzing the political activities of the heads of state of Tunisia, Egypt, Syria, as well as political behavior of political actors and groups in pre- and post-revolutionary period.

Also, a special methodology, typical for sociological Middle Eastern studies, such as an *activist model*, was used. General philosophical methods of *deduction and induction, analysis and synthesis* were also applied in the course of generalizing indicators. *The method of extrapolation* has been used in dissertation, which made it possible to make conclusions regarding the prospects of liberalization of the political institutions in Syria, as well as achievements regarding the openness of the political institutions in Egypt and Tunisia. A systematic method was used for a comprehensive studying of political systems' institutions.



**Scientific novelty** is singled out either with the set of tasks, or with the ways of their solution:

1. It has been concluded for the first time in Bulgarian political science that the pre-revolutionary institutions of the studied states had a patriarchal and closed character. Simultaneously they enjoyed a formal similarity with the traditional institutions of Western countries, what became the basis for the preparation and development of revolutionary events;

2. The essence and peculiarities of the processes of the Arab Spring have been clarified: its internal and external preconditions, during which the protest actions could take place, as well as association and coordination of protesters' efforts, changes in the main legislative documents and the constitutional changes as a result of authoritarian regimes' fall.

3. Understanding of the stages of comparative Middle East studies substantiated the need for their further conduction in the EU is improved. A considerable number of scientific sources, mostly in foreign languages, which are inaccessible in Bulgaria, are analyzed.

4. A scientific analysis of the political institutions of Tunisia, Egypt and Syria in pre-and post-revolutionary period, as well as their transit to democracy as a result of Arab Spring events is done. It is proved that common features between the political institutes are: the dominating role of head of state, the problem of continuity of power, the existence of advisory bodies, the activities of terrorist groups. Contrasting features are: the role and weight of the parliament, government and political parties, the role of religious bodies, the varying degrees of independence of the public sector and the media, the breadth of the ethnic -political and religious-confessional diversity, etc.

5. Further development to a provision that the Arab Spring would not have been possible without a set of internal prerequisites such as was given. The pre-conditions were as follows: demographic explosion, high rates of corruption and inflation of

authoritarian regimes, a relative opportunity for public organizations to be active, development of the Internet, and active joining of the youth to Social Media, etc.

6. It has been emphasized that the institution of head of state has leading role in system of political institutions in Tunisia, Egypt and Syria. In fact, it performs an integrative function. That wasn't changed even by constitutional changes that were adopted by new regimes in the post-revolutionary period (the heads of state remained with very broad powers). Of course, the role of other political institutions (in particular, the government and parliament) has increased somewhat. However, in a result of the Arab Spring political systems have not become stable and still remain vulnerable to external challenges (the main of which is the threat of terrorism in the region and fight against ISIS).

7. The role and significance of the ethnic minority of Kurds in Syria, as a nation, has been identified. Nowadays Kurdish people are divided between the four countries and do not have its own statehood. The violation of their political and civil rights was emphasized and the possibility of obtaining autonomy by the Syrian Kurds according due to freedoms and rights guarantees was outlined.

### **Scientific significance of work:**

- Due to the low level of research of Middle Eastern political institutes transition in a result of Arab Spring, this research contributes to development of political systems' of Tunisia, Egypt, Syria in Bulgaria studies.

- This study complements local and the World comparative politics and transitology. They are still at the stage of formation, because to some extinct, this research expands the geography of scientific interests of Central European researchers.

- In a result of study of political systems' institutes in Tunisia, Egypt and Syria with the application of the methodology of comparative analysis, this dissertation is a weighty addition to the general theory of political systems. It extends their institutional component, proving the distinction of the Middle Eastern political systems. They do

not entirely coincide with the standards established by Western scholars (D. Aston, G. Almond, et al.).

- The dissertation is useful for political practice in connection with the latest trends in the strengthening of the bilateral relations between Bulgaria and Tunisia and Egypt, and in a perspective, free and safe Syria. The results of the study have been published in the specialized publications and printed materials of seminars, round tables and conferences. They may constitute a base for regional studies and analytical notes for current and future politicians.

**The practical significance** of the obtained results is determined by two directions: the theoretical and applied ones. In particular, theoretical work contributed to development of separate topics and special courses in political science and specialties in the field of international relations ("country studies", "international relations - referencing"), etc. Also, publication of study guides, articles, reports, etc., based on the theoretical conclusions of the dissertation, contributed to accumulation of informational and analytical data on the Middle East region is possible. Empirical results may be implemented by referring of this research conclusions to the authorities and the relevant ministry (the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bulgaria and European institutions, as well as the members of parliamentary groups of inter-parliamentary relations). It is important due to taking into account the latest scientific developments in the preparation of official documents and the formation of a strategy of bilateral international relations between selected countries and western states. In addition, the publication of the printed book, dedicated to the topics of the political institutions of Tunisia, Egypt and Syria and their transformation in a result of Arab Spring is planned. It is also planned to upload the results of the research on popular sites of the Association of Middle East Studies and the Middle East Forum, as well as JSTOR in order to let the World community of comparativists and orientologists to get acquainted with them.

**Personal applicant's contribution.** The dissertation is a self-completed scientific work. Its results testify about novelty and independence of conclusions of the dissertation research in general.

**Approbation of the dissertations' results.** The main provisions, conclusions and proposals of the dissertation research were presented at scientific conferences, seminars, round tables, etc.

**Structure of the dissertation.** The work consists of an introduction, four chapters, conclusions, and references. The first chapter of the study is analysis of methodological base, namely the works by Western, Middle Eastern, European scientists and post-Soviet scholars. Their writings were devoted to the methodology of comparative analysis, the problem of transit and transformation of political institutions and Arab Spring. The preconditions of revolutionary events in the selected states and the dynamics of the state and other political institutions have been also arisen. The second chapter includes analysis of political institutions' transit in Republic of Tunisia in the course of the revolution, as well as the pre-conditions that prompted its beginning. The results and achievements of the Tunisian people, who managed to achieve significant progress in opening of their political institutions (and this is enshrined in the Constitution) were analyzed. The third chapter is devoted to the problem of the preconditions, which caused Arab Spring in Egypt. The revolutionary days in this republic, "counterrevolution" and the state of post- revolutionary political institutions were also studied. A special attention has been drawn to the reasons, that allowed the militants' returning back to power in Egypt and the reasons, that have prevented Islamic opposition forces from governing the state in a long run. According to the methodology of the comparative analysis, the state of political institutions has been analyzed in accordance with both changes to the Constitution, which took place in post-revolutionary Egypt. The fourth chapter predominates in volume of the second and third ones. The state of pre-revolutionary political institutions in the Syrian Arab Republic, the beginning of revolutionary actions, the transition of the revolution to a civil war was studied. Also, positions of international policy makers, who were involved in resolving Syrian conflict, as well as its internal actors are examined in the

fourth chapter. Special attention has been also given to the elections and constitutional changes in Syria. In the same time, a separate paragraph in the fourth chapter is devoted to specifics, prospects and socio-political rights of Kurdish ethnic minority, which actively opposes the terrorists and tries to obtain equal rights with the Arab population (which is still non-equal).

## **II. THE MAIN CONTENT OF THE DISSERTATION**

In the *introduction*, the relevance of the topic of the dissertation research is justified; the object and subject of research, goals and objectives are determined; the degree of development of the problem is analyzed; the theoretical and methodological basis of the dissertation research and the empirical base are substantiated. Also the scientific novelty and practical significance of the work are substantiated. The approbation of the main provisions of the study in the process of use was presented. The list of theses printed in a consequence of the candidate's participation in conferences and round tables is included.

*The first chapter* named "The Arab Spring: its methodological basis, essence and general features of state institutions' transformations in Tunisia, Egypt and Syria" consists of three paragraphs. *In paragraph 1.1.* "Research Methodology: literature review and methods" the bibliography used and the methodology, applied in the course of the research are analyzed. The issue of Arab Spring is highly controversial, and the great matrix of approaches to these processes exists. Due to the principle of scientific objectivity, the writings by the scientists, regardless of their origin, namely American, Western European, Eastern European as well as Arab and Israeli ones are analyzed.

For example, a bright representative of the group of Western authors S. Huntington in his work "The Clash of Civilizations" deeply analyzed the causes of political Islam's triumph of and breaking the transit in the Middle East. A. Pshevorsky in the work "Democracy and the market" also considered the transition from authoritarian to democratic societies. Therefore, during breaking of the authoritarian regime the crisis are brewing in society and conflict situations, between five new dominant political forces (based on the structure) arise. Pshevorsky's writings

obtains a high level of abstraction, thus it was extrapolated on the events of Arab Spring as well. P. Merkl's views, whose writings contributed a lot to base of the dissertation methodological base, are built on the denial of opportunities preserving traditional society in a truly democratic transformation. According to his persuasions, when the transition has already begun in one area of society, it certainly would affect all other segments and the events of Arab Spring have proven that. Also the works by other Western scholars, such as L. Mayer, J. Burnett, S. Ogden, J.-E. Lane, R. Macridis, G. Almond, B. Powell, R. Dahl, I. Harik, F. K. Schmitter, F. Fukuyama et. al have constituted methodological base for the research.

Another group of bibliography is the writings by Eastern European and post-soviet scholars, who pay a great attention to the Arab Spring processes and their influence on the transition of political systems. However, it is worth noting, that politics of Middle Eastern countries still remains open for further researches, as it is less developed there, in comparison to Western Middle East Studies. Present times also bring new studies conducted by oriental researchers from the Russian Federation. In particular, M. Zhdanov in "The Islamic concept of world order", considered the issues of war and peace, their humanitarian aspects. Special attention is paid to the problem of human rights in the Middle East. M. Saprionova in "State Governance and the constitutions of the Arab republics" contributed to Middle East Studies by expert analysis and comments on laws (by-laws), which are important for analysis of pre- and post-revolutionary legal changes in a result of Arab Spring. The writings by Ye. Primakov, V. Naumkin, A. Pavlov, Yu. Zinin, R. Sharipov, L. Vasiliyev, Z. Levin, V. Andreyev, B. Gashev, M. Yordanova et. al. were important for this dissertation because of their objective approach and in-depth understanding of oriental peculiarities in a process of political systems' transition to democracy.

The third group of authors, whose researches have a special theoretical and methodological importance for this dissertation, is Arab and Israeli researchers. Among them there is famous thinker M. Ben Barka, a professor at the University of Rabat. According to his views, a transition to democracy in Middle East political systems has been complicated by the presence of foreign military troops in the region,

like it was in colonial times. Another threat M. Ben Barka has seen in informal institute of local landowners, who hinder easy transition. A.L. Al Sayyed emphasized on importance of behavior of new elites, passivity of the public and partial democratization of Egypt as the pre-conditions to liberalization of Egyptian society. They became factors of Arab Spring as well. A. Schnabel, M. Tehranian, E. Said, H. M. Khaled, A. Taled Ibrahimy, A. Saykal, M. al Habib al Marzouk (Abu Yarub), S. Jalal al Azma et al. developed their ideas on analyzing the consequences, as well as factors of Arab Spring in Arab and Muslim societies, arguing on religious and cultural identity of population in Tunisia, Egypt and Syria. Separately the researches by Bulgarian scholars were singled out. There are findings by K. Tsoniev, Yo. Peiev, V. Chukov, Ts. Teofanov et al. among them. Also the methods (case-study, country-study, behavioral method, general philosophical methods, etc.) applied in the dissertation were discussed in this paragraph.

*In the paragraph 1.2. "Arab Spring: its preconditions, essence and specificity"* pre-revolutionary state of political institutes are analysed. It is proven in this paragraph, that Arab Spring is a response of Tunisian, Egyptian and Syrian nations to the range of existing external (influence of the world centers of power and regional actors) and internal factors, such as social, demographic, religious, historical, political, information and other preconditions. Since Arab Spring processes took place almost simultaneously in the countries studied, a significant number of similarities and differences of Tunisian, Egyptian and Syrian systems were singled out. Among them there are: prevailing authoritarian model of political power has collapsed in big group of countries during the Great Arab Revolution in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA); unprecedented political upheaval was a logical result of fatal system errors is quite right authoritarian regimes (dictatorship, violation of constitutional rules, weak redistribution of power, etc.); fall of the role of traditional parties in the public and political life and emergence of political vacuum; high level of uncertainty in the evolving political situation (the old and new forces sharpened the conflict); forming of the most new technologies of mass protests; in most of the countries which experienced the Arab spring, Islamic political forces proved to be leading after

elections; confessional, tribal and ethnic factor played a crucial role in the protest movements. Arab Spring processes are still ongoing. It is proved in this chapter, that raising of the political culture and forming of civic society are key factors to ensure consistency and evolutionary future of democratic transition in the region. At the same time, the specifics of the Middle Eastern societies and the factor of the threat of Islamic fundamentalism should be taken into account.

*Paragraph 1.3.* “The dynamics of the state and its political institutions after the Arab Spring in Tunisia, Egypt, Syria. Justification of the choice of the states studied” is devoted to analysis of political institutes’ state after the revolutionary events while Arab Spring. Also the singling out of Tunisia, Egypt and Syria and their political systems as the objects for studies are explained. It is proven, that Arab Spring seriously effected constitutional changes in Tunisia and Egypt, however civic war in Syria, fighting ISIS, violation of human rights and weak efforts for seeking compromise between political forces in this country hindered legislation changes there. Tunisia, Egypt and Syria are the Middle Eastern countries, which experienced Arab Spring revolutionary events; however these are not the only countries where protests took place. However, they were selected for analysis in the dissertation due to the following reasons: they are republics according to the government form; they belong to the Ummah (Islamic community) and still there is a prevalence of traditions over a civic law; they have common colonial past; all states enjoy favorable geopolitical position of selected countries and big resource potential (human resources, energy transit, tourism etc.); there are similar socio-political cleavages; there were at least legal secularization of civic (military) and religious powers; there was the possibility of associations or union emergence and their development as new political actors (even political parties and leaders) in all countries. Despite a reasonable level of contrasting, Tunisia, Egypt and Syria had a range of similarities which made it possible to experience massive protests and the following political, social and legislative transition to democracy.

*The second chapter* named “Arab Spring in Tunisia: Jasmine Revolution as an example of successful institutional transition to democracy” is devoted to the example



of fruitful changes which took place in consequence of Arab Spring in Tunisia. Also this country was a push for revolutionary events in the Middle East region.

*Paragraph 2.1.* “Features of political institutions before the Tunisian "Jasmine Revolution" in 2010” is about the state of political institutes and political system as a whole before the Arab Spring. Also the development of legislative documents, which constituted a legislative base of the country, including the Constitution are analyzed. A special attention is paid to the most powerful institute of Tunisian political system – the institute of President as a head of the state. This top position in state governance granted the President a wide range of authorities. As the head of the state, President directed a national policy in general, defining its priorities and informing the Chamber of Deputies about it. The President is the supreme commander of the armed forces. With the approval of the parliament, he declared war and concluded peace. Tunisia's President has other traditional powers of the head of state (such as pardoning, the appointment and recall of diplomatic representatives, accreditation of foreign ambassadors, etc.). The President appointed the highest civil and military posts in accordance with the Government's proposal. The President had the right of legislative initiative, the promulgation of laws and to suspend veto. The Chamber of Deputies was entitled to delegate to the President the authority to adopt decrees having a force of law, however to a strictly defined range of issues (including those within the competence of the Parliament) and for a specified period.

Government remained within the system of executive power and is supposed to help the President in implementation of his policies. The President appointed the Prime Minister and, in accordance to his suggestion, the other members of the Government. He might dissolve the Government or dismiss any of its members at its own discretion or on the advice of the Prime Minister. The President was a chairman at the Government's sitting and the Prime Minister only directs and coordinates the work of the Government. The Council of Ministers was responsible only to the head of state.

Parliament was the Supreme Legislative body in Tunisia, where 141 member of a lower chamber was elected by direct population voting. However, a member of the

Chamber of Deputies was not responsible to the voters directly and was considered to represent the entire nation. The MPs enjoyed the same right of legislative initiative, as the President. Also the range of issues on which the legislative acts, which might be adopted, was rather wide. The Parliament in Tunisia de-jure was a separate institution and it represents population only. The orders of municipalities forming, activities of political parties and the amount of their seats in parliament have been also analyzed in this paragraph.

In *Paragraph 2.2. "Jasmine revolution: its course, elections and governments of transition period"* the revolutionary events themselves, as well as further elections and newly formed government are analyzed. The revolution started from the act of self-immolation, committed by M. Boisizi the 17<sup>th</sup> of December 2010. This citizen protested against poverty and police arbitrariness. After Boisizi's death a massive protests captured the whole country. The Boisizi's self-immolation was a push for protests; however the reasons of mass demonstrations rooted deeper. These were unresolved acute social and economic problems, in particular, low wages, unemployment, uneven development of regions. The dissatisfaction of workers who spoke in the framework of local trade unions, as well as the protests of civic society which always ended with clashes with the police. Demonstrations held in December were not aimed at overthrowing the regime, and the bulk of the demonstrators consisted of unemployed voicing social and economic demands. The suppression of protests the 8<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> of January have led to human victims. According to official data, 21 people were killed, however the trade unions declared a number of over 50 people dead. Murder of the protesters only exaggerated protesters' spirit: their amount started to grow rapidly and the revolution spread over many cities. The 14<sup>th</sup> of January, Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali, who has been ruling the state for twenty-three years, fled the country. The regime was overthrown in consequence of Arab Spring.

However the 18<sup>th</sup> of January, about a thousand of demonstrators came out to the streets of the Tunisian capital again, protesting against the entry of the Democratic Constitutional Organization's (DCO) representatives in Transitional Government. The speaker of the lower house of parliament on was obliged to appoint elections within 60

days the basis of Article 57 of the Constitution. Despite the temporary triumph of the opposition, the transition turned out not to be easy, as the representatives of former regime (the ministers and heads of other governmental bodies) tried to continue their political career in different ways. Thus, other protests (Kasba-1 and Kaba-2) took place. The 25<sup>th</sup> of February about 100000 people protested against transitional government by M. al-Gannushi and managed to achieve his resignation. The new respected head of government Qaed es-Sebsi worked on the decrees on transitional period. It was sharply complicated by vulnerable position of NGOs, political parties and inter-clan connections, which hindered forming of new political system. In October 2011 elections to Parliament took place, where the oppositional party “Nahda” won majority. This population’s choice as well as transparency of electoral process was welcomed by the international organizations and the USA and the EU.

*Paragraph 2.3.* “Institutional transition in Tunisia in the result of Jasmine revolution” is devoted to the issues of democratic changes which occurred with new governmental bodies and how they were fixed in new legislative norms. The legislative changes started from changing of a Constitution, on which constitutional commission has worked. It consisted of representatives of six parties, which were presented in a new Parliament. The Islamist MPs insisted on introducing into new constitution a provision, stating that the Sharia is the main source of legislation. However, the key issue on the agenda of constitutional reforms has been the system of government, namely, the fundamental choice between parliamentary and presidential forms of government. The 26<sup>th</sup> of January, 2014 the deputies of the National Assembly voted for the adoption of a new constitution by a majority of 200 votes (out of 216). It widened human and citizens’ rights, especially women’s and youth’s rights. For the first time a separate article was devoted to political parties issues, as the actors of political process. The form of government was defined as semi-presidential republic, where executive branch is divided between the elected president and the prime minister. As a consequence of Arab Spring and transition process in Tunisia, a change in Prime-ministers’ appointment procedure took place. A prime-minister nowadays is appointed by the parliament and responsible to it. The Cabinet of Ministers is now

formed by the Prime Minister representing the party that won the parliamentary elections or the coalition of parties. The Prime Minister develops a general policy of the government and ensures its implementation. The Chamber of Deputies can express a distrust to a member of the government after submitting a demand for the resignation of a minister to the Chairman of the Chamber of Deputies by 1/3 of its members. The authorities of the President were seriously narrowed. The President announces the state of war with the approval of the majority of the Chamber of Deputies in 3/5 of its composition. The President also declares a state of emergency and, in connection with this circumstance, may take any measures after consulting with the Prime Minister and deputies. Only three ministries (defense, foreign affairs and a national security) are subordinate to the president, according to the new Constitution. Transition also affected the legislative body: a new parliament has been elected according to new electoral legislation. The MPs enjoy wider range of authorities and representation of population may be implemented through political parties, present in the parliament. Definitely, Jasmine revolution in Tunisia is a bright example of successful transition to democracy in the Middle East region and it has echoed with anti-government demonstrations in other Arab countries.

*In the third chapter “Egyptian “Date fruit” revolution as a sample of partial institutional transit and its specialties” events of Arab Spring in Egypt are analyzed. The transition to democracy in this country is proven to be less successful, than in Tunisia and it carries partial character. The political institutes were changed in direction of higher liberalization, however this process wasn’t ceaseless. Paragraph 3.1. “Historical - political situation in Egypt before the Arab Spring events” is dedicated to analysis of pre-revolutionary state of political institutes in Arab Republic of Egypt. This President is elected. However, from 1981 the fifth consecutive cadence has been taken by the one person: Muhammad Hosni Mubarak. The rigid policy, which used to be stagnated for thirty years, has tired Egyptian people. Though the president had been elected at the national referendum, his candidature was supposed to be nominated by the National assembly (parliament). This constitutional norm has allowed M. Hosni Mubarak to be re-elected for five cadencies, as he didn’t meet the*

real opposition even in parliament. The powers of the president of Egypt were quite wide, but subjected to the constitutional limits and, most importantly, could be terminated. President was obliged to take an immediate action in case of a threat to national unity or the country as a whole, after the consultations with the Speaker and Prime Minister. President took office during six years. Within this time a head of state had no right to be engaged in any business activities and receive incomes from other sources than salary determined by law. In case of temporary absence or illness of the president, his duties are fulfilled by the prime minister. President appointed the vice president and could dissolve him. The same applies to the prime minister. Cabinet was appointed by the presidential order after consulting with the prime minister. The president might convene a special cabinet meeting. The president was empowered to issue orders to establish economic and administrative institutions to maintain current operations. President also enjoyed a right to appoint 10 of 454 deputies of the People's Assembly, however usually these were people from ethnic and religious minorities or highly respected in society persons. According to A. Siaroff's method of quantifying the head's of State authorities, the president of Egypt enjoyed 7 of 9 scores, which allowed classifying pre-revolutionary Egypt as super-presidential state.

Government in Egypt was an executive power institute and largely it has been controlled by the president. To the functions of government belonged determination of public policy in cooperation with the president and monitoring over its implementation; coordinating the work of ministries, government agencies and institutions; preparation of the national budget; preparation of a total annual plan; signing contracts, grants and loans in accordance with the constitution and laws of Egypt; maintaining public security; protection of human rights. The prime-minister, as well as vice- and profile ministers were appointed by the president. Though each MP had a right to address to any of Cabinet members with request to report, this deputy's authority had remained formal before the Arab Spring. Elections to the Egyptian Parliament (People's Assembly) in pre-revolutionary times have been held under the mixed system: 50 % of MPs were elected by workers and peasants, and 50 % by "others" according to the Constitution. It didn't reflect the stratum of Egyptian society.

People's Assembly candidates were nominated by the parties and individual citizens (in practice also by the parties). They were divided into two lists the in a ballot: the party list (joint in the whole country) and an individual one (candidates who have been running in individual, often two-mandate districts). This complex system only visually aimed to proportional representation of population. In fact complication of the procedures led to greater closure of the political system and approached the Arab spring.

*Paragraph 3.2.* “Revolution events in Tahrir square. The rise and fall of the Muslim Brotherhood and the rematch of the military” reflects the course of revolutionary events and also it is devoted to analysis of victory and failures of religious opposition within a short time. It is important to stress, that during the “date fruit” revolution in Egypt, the oppositionists to the regime refused from the radical, frontal confrontation and used mainly "soft power" technologies. Beside success of Arab Spring in neighboring Tunisia, Egypt also experiences a range of inner challenges. Socio-political crisis in Egypt and the fall of Mubarak’s regime were caused by almost the same factors that led to the beginning of Jasmine Revolution in Tunisia in December 2010: unemployment and poverty, ineffective state and municipal governance, hypertrophied level of corruption, demographic and food problems, weak social security, the authoritarian nature of government, clan ties in power and nepotism of the ruling elite. These pre-conditions caused mass protests in Tahrir square in Cairo. There was information from the media, that opposition “Kifaya” (Enough) was secretly supported by the West. Later youth branch singled out from it and they both played an important role in uprising. People used to unite and coordinate their actions via social media and this kind of communication was hardly controlled by the government. That is why the protests become more and more crowded in Cairo, Alexandria, Suez, Ismailia. During mass anti-government statements the 25th of January, clashes between the demonstrators and law enforcement forces have begun, as a result of which several dozen of demonstrators were killed. Several times the compromise between protesters and Mubarak seemed to be near, and sudden clashes broke the negotiation. In February 2011 Arab Spring won in Egypt and H.

Mubarak was resigned from the office. In March 2011, a constitutional referendum was held in Egypt, somewhat limiting the wideness of the president's powers. The most important event in summer 2012 was the presidential elections, where the representative of the Muslim Brotherhood, M. Morsi, won the second round of the representative of the army circles A. Shafiq with a minimal advantage. In December 2012, a second constitutional referendum was held, where a draft of a new constitution was approved, providing for greater rights for the president and approving the Shariah as the basis of Egypt's legislative system. This triggered a new wave of protests, since neither the Sharia legal field nor the authoritative president was in line with the democratic hopes of the Egyptian people. The largest cities were covered by regular mass demonstrations, accompanied by the death of dozens of people. Demonstrators protested against the authoritarian tendencies of President M. Morsi. The 3rd of July, 2013 Minister of Defense A.F. Al-Sisi announced the overthrow of Morsi. In the next presidential election a representative of the militants A. F. Al-Sisi took presidential office. The events of Arab Spring in Egypt proved it partial nature. On one hand, the opposition finally managed to resign H. Mubarak in the consequence of Arab Spring. On the other hand, it based its views on religious Islamic base, what was unacceptable for Egyptian society, where 10% are the Christians they used to live in a secular country. This was the main reason they the powers were returned to militants again and that's why Arab Spring's outcomes were not totally successful.

*Paragraph 3.3.* "The nature and specificity of institutional changes in the post-revolutionary period in Egypt" is devoted to analysis of newly formed political institutes and their authorities in accordance with a new constitution and legislation. The authorities of the President of the Republic was slightly limited, but not radically; after Arab Spring a candidate for this position could now be elected for only four years (instead of six) and be re-elected once (instead of an unlimited number). Only the candidates who had no citizenship other than Egyptian could participate in the election campaign. Executive power still remained combined between the president and government. As the head of executive power, the president, together with the council of ministers, worked out the general policy of the state and observed its

implementation. The head of state kept right to appoint the prime minister and could dismiss him from his post. President appointed the ministers and their deputies, as well as 1/3 of the members of the Advisory Council and regional governors. The president was entitled to hold a referendum on any important issues relating to the country's supreme interests, propose amendments to articles of the Constitution.

The electoral system of Egypt after the revolution of 2011 did not undergo significant changes and was used during elections parliament and advisory body. In addition to the Constitution, the main law in Egypt regulating the issue of citizens' participation in political life was the Law No. 73 "On the Implementation of Political Rights" of 1965, with numerous amendments has been in force during transitional period and elections. That is why, a new convocation of the deputies didn't enjoy new range of authorities and it still didn't reflect of composition of Egyptian society. The most important thing was, that the parliament couldn't change a constitutional norm, according to which Sharia constituted a base of Egyptian legislation and the parliament didn't also proclaimed the priority of international law over the national one. Such situation is causes misbalance in Egyptian society, where about 10 millions of people are Christians. It meant, that Arab Spring in Egypt didn't cause deep constitutional changes. It brought only to partial and temporary consequences, which may be broken any time in case of occasional weakness of the militants' powers and due to social religious cleavages.

*The fourth chapter* "Syria: Arab Spring which failed to come true" discovers peculiarities of Arab Spring in Syria and the reasons of its complete failure. This country is taken as example of weak transition to democracy in the Middle East.

*Paragraph 4.1.* "Pre-revolutionary situation in Syria" is dedicated to historical and political background of modern Syria. After the military coup in 1963 the country was headed by Hafez Assad. The political system under his reign was stable and strict, supported by a strong presidential administration with extensive involvement of the army, intelligence services and the Alawite minority, while maintaining the state of emergency introduced in 1963, which has been cancelled only in 2011. Syria had a two-tier system of power. Outwardly, a standard administrative structure, headed by



the parliament, the government, the administration of the President, and institutes were operating within the framework of the Baath ideological platform functioned. The head of state and executive power is the President of the Republic, elected by a national referendum for 7 years. The candidature of the President is nominated by the People's Council (Parliament) on the recommendation of the Regional leadership and is submitted by the People's Council for approval of the nationwide referendum. The president appointed one or more vice-presidents. As the head of state, the President develops a nation-wide policy and monitors its implementation in coordination with the Council of Ministers. The President appointed and dismissed civil and military officials; appointed heads of diplomatic missions abroad and accredits heads of foreign diplomatic missions; made decisions on clemency and rehabilitation of individual convicts; awards with badges; applies the right of a suspense veto. The President was the supreme commander-in-chief of the armed forces with the right to declare war and general mobilization. The head of state also could declare and abolish the state of emergency. The president enters into peace agreements, subject to their ratification by the People's Council, and also concluded and denounced other international treaties. While the authorities of the President were very wide, still the main base of its proper functioning was provided by the militants. Syrian parliament played less decisive role in its political system. Thus, elections were held in multi-member constituencies, and one part of the seats is still allocated to workers and peasants in each of them; while the other part is elected by representatives of other social categories with the expectation that at the national scale not less than half of the elected MPs are workers and peasants. The authorities of the parliament include adoption of laws, discussion of government policy, approval of the state budget and plans for social and economic development, ratification of the most important international treaties and agreements, and the announcement of a general amnesty. Government in Syria remained in a system of executive branch and was totally under presidential control. The Chairman of the Council of Ministers and ministers are appointed and dismissed by the President and are in fact responsible only to him (although the Constitution fixed certain elements of the responsibility of the Council of Ministers and the Parliament). The

general tasks of the government are to control the work of the state executive apparatus and its various components, as well as to supervise the implementation of laws and other regulatory and legal acts. Thus, before the Arab Spring political institutes in Syria de-jure had acted separately, but de-facto they experienced strong presidential control, as well as Baath's party and the militants.

*Paragraph 4.2.* "Arab Spring in Syria: the transition of the revolution to a civil war" is devoted to analysis of events of Arab Spring and their change to war inside the country instead peaceful transition to democratic institutes. The difference between revolutionary uprisings which took place in Tunisia and Egypt and military actions in Syria lay in a nature and timing of the conflict. It was ne generalized as follows: due to the fierce nature of the resistance, the crisis turned into a protracted campaign; the crisis, having a dynamic character, drawing an increasing number of participants into itself, has grown to a global problem; a significant and ever-growing gap between the internal dynamics of the crisis and external efforts to regulate the conflict, due to the lack of opportunities for leading international players and, as a consequence, their reluctance to exert any influence on the course of the conflict and go beyond their position of expectance. Another peculiarity of Syrian Arab Spring was strict reaction of the regime on mass protests, unlike Tunisia and Egypt, where government prefer to tale awaiting position at the beginning of demonstrations. When mass protests took place in the cities of Damascus, Aleppo, Daraa, Homs and Hama, the authorities tossed troops and police detachments that used tear gas and weapons against the protesters, causing numerous victims. One more peculiarity of uprising in Syria was emergence there terroristic groups, namely ISIS. This fact allowed B. Assad turning to international community for help in fighting terrorism. Thus, uprisings against regime were turned into fight against the terrorists. Also suppression of the protesters by the militants was also explained with the necessity to fight with ISIS. A big number of participants of the conflict, both internal and external led to prolonging of the Arab Spring into a civil war. Thus, Syrian Arab Spring caused big damage to society, political system, and economy of this country. It also has exaggerated emigrants flow to the European Union and Northern America countries.

*Paragraph 4.3.* “Kurds of Syria as an influential actor in fight against ISIS terrorists” reveals the role and contribution of Kurdish national minority in fighting terrorism and its strong pro-state position, despite their vulnerably situation under Assad’s rule. Syrian Kurds are the second largest ethnic group in the country (after the Arabs). Before the Civil War in 2011-2017 Kurds numbered about 3 million people. They were more than 10% of the total population of Syria. Most of the Syrian Kurds live within two of the fourteen Syrian provinces (El-Hasaka and Aleppo, which make up an impressive population group, but not the vast majority (45% and 15% respectively). In the 20-ies of the last century, when a new Syrian state was being created, the rights of the Kurds as an original ethnos and indigenous people were not taken into account and were not reflected in the constitution or other legislative acts of the country. The military regime that came to power in Syria in 1960-ies adopted a law on creating the so-called Arab security belt in the areas of the traditional settlement of Kurds (along the Syrian-Iraqi-Turkish border). Thus, about 130,000 Kurds who lived different parts of the country at that time were automatically deprived of Syrian citizenship and they had been switched to the situation of refugees or stateless persons in their historic homeland. However, Kurdish spirit and strong yearning for freedoms allowed this minority to be united even under suppression of civic and human rights. Realizing danger of terrorists, the Kurds started fighting against ISIS and achieved sometimes even greater success than regular Syrian army. By the end of 2012, under difficult conditions of the military-political situation, the Kurds have been able to create quite effective local self-government bodies (councils and committees) and self-defense groups. After many months of defensive fighting, the Kurdish militants succeeded. With the support of the US Air Force, they have not only defended the city of Kobani, but also liberated a number of adjacent rural areas. The defense has been lasting for 133 days and ended with the unprecedented victory of the Kurdish forces, initiating the destruction of the myth of the invincibility of the "Islamic state". Despite many Kurds had to live their homeland as emigrants, seeking for secure abroad, and their contribution in fighting ISIS in Syrian civic war hardly may be estimated.

*Paragraph 4.4. "Non-realised Arab Spring"* is dedicated to issues of on-going civic war and state of political institutes after Arab Spring uprisings, which caused this prolonged conflict. The 26th of February, 2012, a nationwide referendum on the adoption of the new Basic Law of Syria was held. According to a new Constitution, The president is still elected for a seven-year term, but can now be in office for no more than two consecutive terms. The candidate for the presidency can now be nominated by 25% of the composition of the parliament (earlier the candidacy of the president could be proposed only by the regional leadership of the ruling party.) The President kept right to appoint prime ministers and ministers and to resign them from their posts. Also the head of state appoints judges of the Supreme Court of Constitution who swear an oath before him. Article 112 of the Constitution significantly enhances the legislative powers of the President, granting him the right to exercise legislative power in the period between sessions of the People's Council. Thus, failed Arab Spring didn't facilitate successful transition to democracy and the institute of president remained especially influential. The Constitution - 2012 guaranteed a multi-party system and pluralism of thoughts. However, the constitution introduced a ban on the activities of parties based on religious or ethnic basis. Political parties in Syria are already being formed, but the committee responsible for registering political parties is headed by the Minister of the Interior. In addition to the ruling Baath Party, 11 other political organizations took part, including 7 new ones created during three months before the elections in the parliamentary elections - 2012. The peculiarity of the Syrian parliamentary elections was that the parliamentary quota still has existed. Following the election results, the Progressive National Front headed by Baath won a convincing victory and obtained 168 (out of 250) seats in the parliament. Thus, newly elected parliament remained loyal to president and hardly differs with higher level of political independence. Government is under total presidential control and is actually formed by the president. Thus, Arab Spring in Syria, as a failure model, has proven that transition to democracy may be unsuccessful and may cause a big damage both to political and economic systems, as well as its societies. The

consequences of Arab Spring in Syria are noticed not only in the Middle East, but also in western countries, experiencing growing immigrants flow.

The *Conclusions* contains the main findings of the dissertation research. Briefly they may be summarized as follows:

- The Arab Spring was analyzed in Middle East region, namely in Tunisia, Egypt and Syria as a set of preconditions, events and democratization-liberalization changes. They have led to the transformation of outdated regimes with positive or negative consequences. Arab Spring as a transit process is considered in Middle East, in which a mixed transit model was implemented. Transit was studied by such scholars as S. Huntington, P. Merkl, D. North, R. Macridis, et al., whose works constituted the methodological basis for this study and they were particularly valuable in terms of the comparative approach. In addition to the work of Western scholars (American and European), the studies by Middle Eastern authors (Arab and Israeli), researchers from Central and Eastern Europe (namely, Polish, Romanian, Bulgarian, Russian, Ukrainian, etc.) are also used. A special group of sources for the work consists of media reports in the form of articles, reports, online forums, and profile groups in social networks, etc.;

- For the research of state political institutes, namely the Republic of Tunisia, the Arab Republic of Egypt, the Syrian Arab Republic was chosen on the basis of their representativeness. They represent groups of states of the Middle East region, which have already undergone transit processes (or are still on-going) with different consequences. Thus, Tunisia represents a group of states, where Arab Spring accelerated the development of democratic transformations and political institutions became more open. Egypt is a model of the complexities in democratization process, since in the group of similar countries there were rollbacks of the democratization. The waves of liberalization processes took place and democratic changes weren't deep. The Syrian Arab Republic is a bright representative of the failed changes that have not led to the openness and resilience of political institutes. On the contrary, Arab Spring in Syria created chaos, economic collapse, civil war, the migration crisis and the outrage of terrorism. In addition, Syria is a multi-faceted, ethno-political and religious-

confessional unity, where, the ethnic minority of the Kurds has been in a vulnerable position.

Being contrasting according to the results of the Arab Spring, the selected states have a number of characteristics that allow positioning them as similar. In particular, this is a form of government (all are the republics); we observe their affiliation with Ummah (all states have a Muslim majority population of different directions); commonality of the colonial past; geopolitical position of the selected states for studying; their resource potential (human, tourist, energy); domination of traditions over civil laws, etc.

- Since the subject of the study has been the political institutions of Tunisia, Egypt and Syria and their dynamics as a result of the Arab Spring events, it should be stressed on the dominance of the institute of the head of state in all republics either before or after the revolutionary uprisings. Even constitutional changes and the adoption of a number of important laws have not transformed the patriarchy of the institutional component of the political systems in the countries researched. Despite the fact that Tunisia became a parliamentary-presidential republic, de facto powers of the head of state remained broad enough. In particular, president defines the state policy, he has the right to announce a state of emergency, to declare war and conclude peace, to initiate constitutional changes and to raise these issues on public referendum, etc. However, as a result of the Arab Spring, the government has ceased to be a "supplement" to the head of state of Tunisia and began to report not to him, but to parliament.

Constitutional changes have taken place twice in Egypt, but the president's powers have not been diminished, but even somewhat expanded in comparison with pre-revolutionary times. Syria is characterized by "inheritance of power" (within the Assads clan) and the revolutionary events have not resigned President Bashar al-Assad from the office;

- The institutions of the prime minister and governments also differ in their influence and accountability. Thus, in Tunisia, Egypt, Syria, the government is headed by a prime minister, but in Tunisia he represents a political party that won the

parliamentary elections (or parliamentary coalition). In Egypt and Syria, the prime minister is appointed by head of state. In addition, Arab Republic of Egypt introduced a parallel political institution with the government (the High Council of Armed Forces);

- Parliament is the legislature in all the researched states. In Tunisia, the right of legislative initiative has a president, a prime minister and at least 10 people's deputies. The parliament can express mistrust to the prime minister, who is accountable to the legislature. As a result of the Arab Spring, the parliament of Egypt has been also changed: it became unicameral, and the consultative body “Shura” was canceled. Thus, the parliament in Egypt became more dependent on the head of state. The Syrian parliament has a pro-presidential majority and is president’s actual satellite. The increase in the number of female parliamentarians is also new norm which occurred after Arab Spring;

- The Arab Spring in selected for our research countries is a complex of internal and external preconditions, processes, and consequences of democratic transition. Therefore, the internal conditions of the Arab Spring in Tunisia, Egypt and Syria may be generalized. First of all, it is a long-term reign of the heads of states (Ben Ali, Mubarak, both Assads); slow economic development against the backdrop of a demographic explosion; high rates of unemployment among qualified young people who were looking for self-realization; closed character of political institutions; excessive military influence on political decisions, etc.;

- The external conditions of the processes of the Arab Spring are characterized by the support of external forces (world centers of strength, charitable foundations for the opening of the Middle Eastern societies, IT companies and social networks, separate TV channels and printed media, etc.) ideas on the need for an early change in the political system. The aforementioned external forces relied primarily on young people, female gender-theory followers; non-governmental organizations that had legal secure access to funding from abroad. A special place in the acceleration of the Arab Spring processes is caused by the speed and accessibility of the Internet and gadgets, especially among users of an age-old audience of up to thirty-five years. Consequently,

it is stated that Arab Spring would be completely impossible without external (mostly western support). At the same time, these processes are not considered as "state coups". The complex of internal pre-conditions was too obvious and over the course of many decades was burdening the Tunisian, Egyptian and Syrian societies. As a result, all these reasons gave an impetus to transit to democratization changes in Middle East, called "Arab Spring".

- It is important that some of Arab Spring's episodes had *tragic character*. For example, demonstrations of protest by some residents against the regime occurred everywhere (self-immolation of M. Buazizi in Tunisia, the behavior of adolescents in Syria, etc.). They followed the regime's use of force in countering the protesters (bloody dispersal of protesters in Tahrir Square in Egypt, the shooting of rallies in the capital Tunisia, ill-treatment of children by police in Syria, etc.). The next stage was mass uprisings (mosques are involved in this, the modern means of communication are actively used: groups and forums are formed through social networks, in which form of struggle and the place and time of speeches are discussed). The central and largest area of the capital, which is important to be blocked by the forces of the internal forces because of its central importance in the system of transport of the capital and because of its proximity to the diplomatic institutions, the premises of ministries and departments, hotels for foreigners with uninterrupted Wi-Fi, and others, was chosen as a place of protest. Initially, the protests were apolitical in their nature and mostly peaceful. The fatal mistake of power carriers took place: they did not seriously perceive the threat of mass protest, hoping that somehow they will all leave by themselves. However, the meeting-runners persistently continued to protest peacefully, and the authorities begun to break free: the force breakdown of the protesters is used, tens appear first, and there are hundreds of dead and wounded. It is interesting to note that there are statements from both the pro-government and political opposition forces of the studied countries that announce about the presence of so-called "third force" in the squares. This "third force" participated in provocations.

There was a split in society, where the ideological "war of all against all" prevailed. The bulk of the performances were growing tenfold: the square was filled



by all those who took a wait-and-see position, who doubted and who were afraid. The international community joined the events inside the capitals: international organizations, influential and authoritative figures of culture and science, presidents of leading states, political leaders, and others. The protests reached its culmination and had an irreversible character. The crowds of protesters occupied the premises of the authorities, block roads. The protests spread in large and medium-sized cities in each of the studied states. Local councils declare mistrust to the central government; the regime is no longer able to control the situation. The political forces (often with different ideologies) join the protesters. They are also trying to protest against the current regime. Some political leaders previously acting in exile return to examined countries. Thus, Jasmine revolution in Tunisia, Date-fruit revolution in Egypt ended with the overthrow of the regimes or became the beginning of a long-term conflict that evolved into a civil war (Syria).

- The consequences of the Arab Spring in Tunisia, Egypt and Syria either are evaluated either positive or negative ones. There were constitutional changes in all countries after the events of Arab Spring. Constitutional changes in Egypt took place twice. It is worth noting that the success of certain constitutional changes depends on the openness of the society itself and its willingness to live according to the new models (partially copied from the western samples). Thus, Arab Spring brought the most significant democratic changes in Tunisia as Tunisian society has been traditionally considered to be the most open in the whole Middle East region.

In Egypt, the "post-spring" transit faced difficulties connected with, first of all, the entry into the political arena of the "Brother Muslims" party, previously banned for the decades. Having initially received a significant support from the people, who saw a genuine opposition to the regime of Mubarak and the militants, the party quickly executed it and met the aftermath of the counter-revolution. It has been proven in our study that Islamist-oriented parties in a secular society (and Egypt is its bright example) do not take root and cannot become an authoritative political player. This happens because the imposition of Shari'a norms contradicts to the traditions of civil law and causes protests in broad non-Muslim communities (Christians, Jews, etc.).

Syria has become the only state studied, where the public protests have come up against the harsh opposition of the regime and where its change has not taken place. Thus, a part of the protesters joined the paramilitary opposition, which is still conducting a militaristic struggle against Assad and his Allawite community. However, it should be noted that, in addition to the Syrian opposition, radicals and even terrorist groups appeared among anti-regime forces. Constitutional changes that took place in Syrian Arab Republic were superficial and did not affect the rights of ethnic and linguistic minorities.

- At the time of the spread of the Arab Spring, pseudo-caliphate "ISIS" has appeared in Middle East. ISIS has taken control over certain areas of Iraq and the Syria, it recruited to its ranks young people from neighboring and European states. At the invitation of B. Assad, the Russian Federation joined the open fight against ISIS. The International Coalition of Military Forces, composed of the United States, France, Germany and other countries, provided support to the paramilitary Syrian opposition and the Kurds who also heroically struggled against the terrorists. Emergence of ISIS may be considered as one of negative consequences of Arab Spring.

- A particularly important problem was the Kurdish problem, which received new forms and tasks in a result of the events of the Arab Spring. The Kurds are the largest nation in the world that densely populate the territory divided between the four modern states (Syria, Iraq, Turkey and Iran) and does not have its own state sovereignty. Syrian Kurds do not claim independence, but still do not have basic Syrian rights: a part of the Kurdish population still lacks Syrian citizenship. Kurds were active fighters against ISIS terrorists. A part of Kurdish territories have been released with their efforts. The Syrian Kurds seek to equalize their rights with the Syrian Arab population, however, these efforts are faced with an active opposition of the current regime and lack of international support.

- Thus Arab Spring gave an impetus to the democratic transit of the states of Tunisia, Egypt and Syria and theirs political institutions in. Transition to democracy is a long process and the results over the last years are not yet reliable indicators of the success or failure of these processes. Rather, it is argued that the Arab Spring is a

multilateral phenomenon characterized by positive and negative consequences, which would become the subject of further scientific research.