

The thesis „Attempt at Democratic Transition in Iran 1997–2000“ analyzes the development of restricted liberalization and democratization, which was started in Iran in Spring 1997 by election of reformist presidential candidate Muhammad Khatami into office. The essay looks on these events as a result of the longer cultural change which occurred in Iran since the 1979 Islamic Revolution and as a consequence of the cleavages which split the Iranian political space into several different streams. The thesis uses a theoretical perspective based on the idea that Iran, in the course of 20th century, constantly evolved in the form of modern national state for which the Islamic revolution was but a regime change, which replaced one authoritarianism for another with a different ideology. Based on this perspective the events after the Khatami election are analyzed in terms of the transitologic theory through which the essay examines the specific dynamics of political contest between the softliners who push for a democratization of the regime and the hardliners who take pains to preserve the authoritarian practice based on the theory of „The Rule of the Jurisconsult“ articulated first by the founder of the Islamic Republic, Ruhollah Khomeini.