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DIFFUSION AND CIVIL SOCIETY MOBILIZATION IN COLOURED REVOLUTIONS

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Abstract

This article explores the dynamics of transnational diffusion and its influence on civil society mobilization in the "coloured revolutions" in Georgia and Ukraine. In the two countries, youth and civic movements that spearheaded mobilization efforts were closely modelled on the example of Otpor, the Serbian resistance group. The article argues that emulation of Otpor's techniques of mobilization was facilitated by favourable political conditions in Georgia and Ukraine. In explaining the mechanisms of diffusion, it focuses on the cognitive processes that allowed local activists to realize that similar actions would bring similar results despite cross-national differences in context. Finally, in two separate case studies, it traces the effects of diffusion on the formation of Kmara and Pora youth movements. The underlying argument of the article is that transnational diffusion, if coupled with favourable domestic context, can compensate for the relative weakness of civil society in triggering large-scale and effective collective action.

1. Introduction

Since its demobilization in the aftermath of 1989, scholars of post-communist politics have all but agreed that civil society in the region remains underdeveloped. When compared to established democracies, post-communist polities exhibit markedly lower levels of participation and membership in voluntary organizations; instances of collective protest and mobilization are rare in comparison with, for example, the post-authoritarian setting in Latin America. Howard attributed this "distinctive weakness" of post-communist civil society to the "homogenizing effect" of the communist institutional system that engendered widespread and persistent mistrust of any kinds of

formal organizations.[1] Meanwhile, efforts of Western donors to resuscitate civil society via extensive support of local organizations have often fallen short of desired outcomes. As Mendelson commented, the influence of NGOs on elites in the post-communist states is often "negligible or nonexistent".[2] Yet not long after these studies pronounced civil society weak and politically insignificant, the so-called "coloured revolutions" in Georgia and Ukraine saw civil society organizations rise to the forefront of popular mobilization that toppled corrupt and incompetent regimes. Organized in youth movements and coalitions of NGOs, civil society activists staged imaginative campaigns that mocked pro-regime candidates and mobilized opposition supporters in the run-up to the elections; they also played a salient role in exposing electoral fraud and drove thousands of angered voters into the streets.[3] The Georgian and Ukrainian democratic breakthroughs are often hailed as a "triumph of civil society"[4]; in reality, the actual contribution of civic and youth movements is difficult to measure. Still, the unprecedented scale, sophistication and effectiveness of collective action in coloured revolutions are striking, given the backdrop of generally weak associational life and the alleged impotence of NGOs.

A potentially fruitful way of approaching this apparent puzzle is to look at the dynamics of mobilization in the context of intra-regional diffusion. The two leading youth movements, Kmara in Georgia and Pora in Ukraine, were heavily inspired by the example of Otpor, the Serbian movement that helped overthrow Slobodan Milosevic in 2000. Otpor veterans personally trained

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1 Marc Morjé Howard, *The Weakness of Post-Communist Civil Society in Eastern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 20.

2 Sarah E. Mendelson, "The Power and Limits of Transnational Democracy Networks in Postcommunist Societies", in The Power and Limits of NGOs, ed. Sarah E. Mendelson, John K. Glenn (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 233.

3 On the role of civil society organizations in Eastern Europe's democratic breakthroughs, see Joerg Forbrig, Pavol Demes, eds,. Reclaiming Democracy (Washington: German Marshall Fund, 2007). Taras Kuzio, "Civil society, Youth and Societal Mobilization in Democratic Revolutions", Communist and Post-Communist Studies, 39(3) 2006: 365-386.

4 Nadia Diuk, "The Triumph of Civil Society", in Revolution in Orange, ed. Anders Aslund, Michael McFaul (Washington: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2005)

Georgian and Ukrainian activists in techniques of non-violent protest, and actively assisted in setting up their movements' structures and defining campaign strategies. Clearly, diffusion can mobilize even relatively underdeveloped civil society into action. Learning about prior successful examples alters local activists' evaluation of the likelihood of success, thereby increasing their propensity to launch a new movement. Furthermore, as the case of coloured revolutions demonstrates, diffusion also improves the effectiveness of their endeavour by providing a ready-made blueprint for emulation.

The purpose of this article is to shed more light on the linkage between diffusion and civil society mobilization in the run-up to the Rose and Orange revolutions. What conditions made it possible for foreign templates to stir collective action in Georgia and Ukraine? And what mechanisms translated diffusion into the actual formation of youth movements? To address these questions, the article will first identify the "template" in question. Second, it will argue that the process of its diffusion was, in important ways, conditioned by the political context of "recipient" countries – or, in the language of social movement theorists, by their "structures of political opportunity". Third, in discussing the mechanisms of diffusion, emphasis will be placed on actors and their perceptions; it will be argued that actors engaged in "theorization", a cognitive process allowing Georgian and Ukrainian activists to realize that similar courses of action would bring similar results despite structural differences between the countries. The final section will present the case studies of Kmara and Pora, illustrating how enhanced prospects for mobilization and transnational diffusion affected the dynamics of movement formation.[5]

By accentuating factors external to the emergent movements rather than the strength of civil society per se, it becomes evident that the recent outburst of activism in the post-Soviet space should not be over-interpreted when assessing civil society's

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[5]Western financial assistance to local civil society organizations was another factor critical to the success of popular mobilization in Georgia and Ukraine. Without external funding, none of the movements could have sustained its nationwide campaign; all social movements need material resources to function. Nonetheless, Western aid explains little about why Ukrainians or Georgians decided to engage in collective action by copying practices used in Serbia and Slovakia. Thus, for the purpose of this article – and due to limited space – the availability of material resources is treated as given.

overall robustness and the consequent prospects for democratic consolidation. Of course, prior development of civil society laid the necessary groundwork of pre-existing institutions, social networks and connective structures from which youth movements could germinate.[6] In coloured revolutions, however, the relative weakness and scarcity of these structures – inherent to the post-Soviet context – was offset by favourable political circumstances and powerful effects of diffusion that provided a unique platform for mobilization, not unlike the case of the 1989 anti-communist revolutions. In the changed landscape of post-revolutionary politics, however, civic and youth movements inevitably lose part of their purpose, influence and organizational capacity. Finally, it is worth noting that NGOs and civic movements represent but one segment of civil society; likewise, popular mobilization against authoritarian practices – albeit vital in the transition period – represents but one of the functions of civil society in promoting democratic progress.[7]

2. Diffusion and coloured revolutions

References to diffusion figure prominently in the scholarly accounts of coloured revolutions. The concept itself is a metaphor borrowed from the natural sciences and refers to the "process in which an innovation is communicated through certain channels over time among the members of a social system".[8] In the same vein, a number of scholars, most notably Bunce and Beissinger, conceptualize the wave of democratic breakthroughs as driven by the diffusion – via collaborative networks of transnational activists and demonstration effects – of a generic model of regime change invented by "early risers" in Slovakia and Serbia and emulated by successive revolutionaries in Georgia, Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan.[9]

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6 Doug McAdam, John D. McCarthy and Mayer N. Zald, eds., *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements: Opportunities, Mobilizing Structures and Framing* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996)

7 Diamond lists thirteen different functions through which civil society assists in deepening and consolidating democracy. Larry Diamond, *Developing Democracy: Toward Consolidation* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1999)

8 Everett Rogers, *Diffusion of Innovations* (London: Free Press, 2003), 5.

9 Mark S. Beissinger, "Structure and Example in Modular Political Phenomena: The Diffusion of Bulldozer/Rose/Orange/Tulip Revolutions," Perspectives on Politics, 5(2) 2007: 259-276. Valerie Bunce and

Their model rests on unity of the opposition forces, a spirited mobilization campaign, and the exposure of electoral fraud that subsequently triggers non-violent protest. However, as critics of this approach point out, an interpretation of coloured revolutions that privileges diffusion as the primary explanation can be challenged by demonstrating empirical inconsistencies.[10] For instance, at least one of the core components of the "electoral model" – opposition coalescence – is difficult to be transplanted from one country to another by transnational activists. Instead, the formation of a unified opposition bloc is usually a function of domestic elite contestation, and often a culmination of its long-term development. Although "demonstration effects" of prior revolutions may prompt an otherwise quarrelsome opposition to work together or a previously loyal elite group to defect, the causal story is very difficult to substantiate empirically. In sum, even as the political dynamics in coloured revolutions followed a similar pattern – one that entailed opposition coalescence, electoral fraud and mass protests – these may, strictly speaking, still be "illusions" of diffusion induced by an independent clustering of similar domestic factors.[11]

Given the difficulty of distilling real effects of diffusion on political and social outcomes, it is useful to focus merely on practices whose adoptions can be pinned down empirically, and separate actors engaged in their active transfer – i.e. mainly civil society activists – from other political actors. From this perspective, the core of the Serbian "innovation" is a non-violent youth movement that defines elections as a focal point of collective action. It presents itself as a grass-roots vanguard of democratic revolution that transcends traditional political parties, and its pervasive and non-conventional campaign aims to "shake people out of their slumber".[12] The movement's mobilization drive, targeting primarily the young, urban and better educated segments of the

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Sharon Wolchik, "International Diffusion and Post-communist Electoral Revolutions", Communist and post-Communist Studies, 39(3) 2006: 283-204

10 Lucan A. Way, "The Real Causes of the Color Revolutions", *Journal of Democracy*, 19(3) 2008:55-69

11 Daniel Brinks and Michael Coppedge, "Diffusion is No Illusion: Neighbour Emulation in the Third Wave of Democracy", *Comparative Political Studies*, 39(4) 2006: 463-489.

12 Vladimir Illic, *Otpor: In or Beyond Politics* (Belgrade: Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Serbia, 2001), 36.

electorate, is designed to bolster the pro-democratic opposition, disadvantaged in the electoral process by the regime's manipulation, especially its abuse of "administrative resources" and control of mainstream media. Once the outpolled incumbent resorts to electoral fraud – a frequently used method of preserving political power in post-Soviet pseudo-democracies – its quick exposure acts a "revolutionary trigger" and catalyst for non-violent mass protests.[13] Otpor-style movements are distinct by their use of corporate branding and modern PR in the design of campaign messages and posters. Furthermore, Otpor activists make extensive use of humour, satire and symbols of popular culture via direct street performances and other happenings to ridicule the regime; Otpor made civil resistance and political campaigning look "cool". Also, it adopted a decentralized cell structure that fostered a strong sense of kinship among foot-solider activists and blocked regimes' efforts to subvert them. Crucially, during the campaign and in the post-election protests, Otpor's actions were guided by the principles of non-violent conflict.[14] The practice of non-violence was succinctly captured by Otpor's Alexander Maric: "When the Georgian activists asked me whether they could fight the police, I told them: No, you're non-violent. Police beat people. You stand in the front-row, some of you will bleed, journalists take pictures of it, CNN puts it online, and that's it."[15] In addition to Otpor's example, activists in the post-Soviet states – and especially in Ukraine – also drew on the lessons and experiences of Slovakia's civil society, whose voter mobilization campaign, OK98, helped the opposition defeat the authoritarian-leaning Prime Minister Vladimir Meciar in the 1998 elections.

3. Structures of political opportunity

By itself, the availability of a template for effective mobilization does not explain the decision of civil society actors in other countries to copy it. The political context in "recipient" countries

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13 See Joshua Tucker, "Enough! Electoral Fraud, Collective Action Problems, and Post-Communist Coloured Revolutions", *Perspectives on Politics*, 5(3) 2007: 535-551.

14 See Srdja Popovic, Andrej Milivojevic and Slobodan, Slobodan, *Nonvionlent Struggle: 50 Crucial Points* (Belgrade: Centre for Applied NonViolent Actions and Strategies, 2007)

15 Alexander Maric, Otpor activist, interview by author, Novi Sad, (March 28, 2008)

plays a salient role. In their analyses, Beissinger and Bunce implicitly treat transnational diffusion as an independent variable affecting the likelihood of regime change. However, in the case of Georgia and Ukraine, the direction of causation may be the reverse, in that the emulation of Otpor's techniques was itself conditioned by prior shifts in power relations that increased the likelihood of regime change. For instance, in Ukraine, it was not until 2003 – when it became clear that Viktor Yushchenko and Yulia Tymoshenko would form a broad-based anti-Kuchma alliance ahead of the 2004 presidential elections – that local civil society activists decided to launch their own Otpor-style youth movement, despite the fact that Otpor veterans had been active in Ukraine ever since Milosevic's fall in 2000.[16] In short, activists' attitudes toward Otpor's model have been shaped by domestic "structures of political opportunity". According to Tarrow, these are "consistent – but not necessarily formal, permanent or national – signals to social and political actors which either encourage or discourage them to use their internal resources to form social movements".[17] Mobilization does not always correlate with real changes in the political context. Some scholars argue that perceptions of increased opportunities, rather than expansion in real existing ones, ultimately set social movements in motion.[18] This is because structures of political opportunity translate into collective action primarily by affecting activists' expectations of success or failure.

A core element of political opportunity structures is the level of openness of a given polity. It appears plausible to assume that, on the whole, neither fully open nor completely closed systems are likely to engender the highest degree of incentive for contentious action. The notion was first addressed and quantitatively examined in 1973 by Peter Eisinger, who studied conditions associated with incidences of urban protest and race riots in American cities in the 1960. Eisinger concluded that

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16 Milos Milenkovic, Otpor activist, interview by author, Belgrade, March 25, 2008

17 Sidney Tarrow, "States and opportunities: the political structuring of social movements", in *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements: Opportunities, Mobilizing Structures and Framing*, ed. Doug McAdam, John D. McCarthy, Mayer N. Zald (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 54.

18Charles Kurzman, "Structural Opportunity and Perceived Opportunity in Social-Movement Theory: The Iranian Revolution of 1979", *American Sociological Review*, 61(1) 1996: 153-170.

protest is most prevalent in municipalities characterized by a "mix of open and closed factors" in terms of their responsiveness to citizens' needs and demands. [19] Applying this logic to today's political systems and the ways they structure civil society mobilization, incentives for the formation of pro-democratic movements should be highest in the so-called "hybrid regimes". Hybrid regimes are ambiguous systems that combine democratic institutions – especially elections – with more or less authoritarian practices.[20] Indeed, as one seasoned Eastern European activist put it, "action is most easily spurred in mixed regimes; in functioning democracies, if you attempt to change something, you will never find enough people to go for it with you because the system is essentially working; in an authoritarian regime, on the other hand, you lack the vital element of hope".[21] The regimes of Eduard Shevardnadze in Georgia and Leonid Kuchma in Ukraine – and many other in the post-Soviet space – have been frequently categorized in the literature as hybrid regimes, or, more specifically, as "diminished subtypes" of authoritarianism. As such, they provide the greatest systemic incentives for potential pro-democratic insurgents.

However, the actual emergence of a social movement and its timing is influenced by the more dynamic and situational aspects of political opportunity structures, determined by configurations of power relations that characterize systems at a given point in time. [22] In Tarrow's typology, dynamic elements of opportunity include instability of political alignments, divisions among elites and the presence of influential allies. In reality, these factors are often intertwined and reinforce each other. The inability of incumbents to retain a cohesive power base destabilizes existing

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19 Peter K. Eisinger, "The Conditions of Protest Behaviour in American Cities", *The American Political Science Review*, 67(1) 1973: 11-28

20 Larry Diamond, "Thinking about Hybrid Regimes", *Journal of Democracy*, 13(2) 2002: 21-35. See also Andreas Schedler, ed., Electoral Authoritarianism (Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2006); Stephen Levitsky and Lucan A. Way, "The Rise of Competitive Authoritarianism", *Journal of Democracy*, 13(2) 2002: 51-65.

21 Pavol Demes, German Marshall Fund, interview by author, Bratislava, (January 3, 2008)

22 Doug McAdam, "Conceptual origins, current problems, future directions", in Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements: Opportunities, Mobilizing Structures and Framing, ed. Doug McAdam, John D. McCarthy, Mayer N. Zald (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 26.

political alignments that may result in elite divisions and the emergence of "influential allies" in the form of formidable anti-incumbent opposition. In hybrid regimes, ruling elites are generally most vulnerable toward the end of an electoral cycle, given that – unlike in full-blown dictatorships – elections remain competitive, outcomes are uncertain, and opposition victory is possible.[23] Looming elections thus amplify Tarrow's dynamic elements of opportunity, in particular if incumbents are weak or "lame ducks", as in the case of Shevardnadze and Kuchma, thereby encouraging opposition coalescence and elite defections.[24] In sum, from the vantage point of aspiring revolutionaries, windows of opportunity open once ruling elites appear weakened, divided and unpopular, while in response, democratic opposition begins to show signs of cohesiveness, determination and popularity. The nearest electoral contest usually assumes a polarized and hyped atmosphere in which the polls are perceived as a de facto referendum on the incumbent regime, whereby the latter is eventually forced to steal elections to remain in power. Arguably, this black-and-white picture of electoral politics – with an entrenched autocratic-leaning leader is challenged by a broad-based pro-democracy alliance – is possible only in "hybrid" regimes. For activists striving to replicate Otpor's story, it is a necessary precondition, given that civic movements do not directly take part in elections and their success hinges on the existence of a viable alternative that could benefit from their mobilization. Of course, if favourable conditions are not in place, activists may still launch attempts at mobilization, but with limited success.[25]

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23 Andreas Schedler, "The Nested Game of Democratization by Elections", *International Political Science Review*, 23(1) 2002: 103-122.

24 Henry Hale, "Regime Cycles", *World Politics*, 58(1) 2005: 133–165.

25 A prime example of failure in the face of unfavourable circumstances is the mobilization campaign of Zubr, an Otpor-trained youth movement in Belarus, against the autocratic president Alexander Lukashenka. In the aftermath of the Orange revolution, Otpor-style youth movements sprang in many countries of the post-Soviet space, including Azerbaijan, Russia or Uzbekistan. These groups, albeit operating in unfavourable conditions, were drawn into action by the cumulative effect of prior examples. Beissinger, "Structure and Example in Modular Political Phenomena: The Diffusion of Bulldozer/Rose/Orange/Tulip Revolutions"

4. Mechanisms of diffusion

An expansion of opportunities need not automatically lead to collective action. Opportunities may be missed;[26] and even if a particularly suitable model for mobilization exists, this may go unnoticed. For this reason, it is vital to consider the micro-mechanisms of diffusion that mediate between the former and the latter, enabling would-be revolutionaries in Georgia and Ukraine to become cognizant of and seize upon expanding political opportunities by adopting the very same approaches as their Serbian and Slovak forerunners. This connection is by no means automatic, insofar as it entails the transfer of nearly identical strategies and objectives across dissimilar settings of Milosevic's Serbia and Meciar's Slovakia, on the one hand, and post-Soviet Georgia and Ukraine, on the other.

In part, the relative ease with which Otpor's innovations travelled can be attributed to the nature of ties connecting Otpor veterans and their interlocutors in Georgia and Ukraine. Diffusion theory posits that face-to-face interaction is most effective in persuading an individual to adopt novel practices.[27] Simply hearing about Milosevic's downfall in the media and learning about Otpor's story online would hardly have convinced activists elsewhere to copy Otpor's project in its entirety. Agency – i.e. active promotion and dissemination of successful techniques by some dozen veterans of the Serbian and Slovak campaigns – played a key role. Their interaction with local activists occurred both at the level of movement leaders, whereby overall movement strategy was developed, as well as at the level of foot-soldier activists, usually in training sessions for groups of up to 30 activists. Furthermore, smooth transmission was fostered by what Burt termed "structural equivalence", i.e. the degree to which actors occupy "the same position in the social structure".[28] Leading youth activists were generally from middle-class families, and either studied or completed studies at one of the more prestigious

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26 Traci M. Sawyers & David S. Meyer, "Missed Opportunities: Social Movement Abeyance and Public Policy", Social Problems, 46(2) 1999: 187-206

27 Rogers, *Diffusion of Innovations*, 18

28 Ronald Burt, "Social Contagion and Innovation: Cohesion Versus Structural Equivalence", The American Journal of Sociology, 92(6) 1987: 1291

universities in major cities; most were well-traveled, often English-speaking, and sharing a broadly defined pro-Western outlook; many had already participated in collective action at the level of university politics. As a result, albeit operating in different environments, transmitters and adopters could easily identify with each other at a personal level.[29]

Still, by itself, personal chemistry between individual activists would not suffice to transmit what arguably was a very complex innovation – a method of affecting regime change. What ultimately mattered were the adopters' perceptions regarding its relevance and applicability to their domestic contexts. Rationalizing the use of Otpor's methodology had thus been conditioned by what social movement theory coined the "attribution of similarity".[30] In general, as diffusion theorists Strang and Meyer famously argued, culturally analyzed similarities and linkages construct a tie between actors and entities which is substantially different – and ultimately more pervasive than – direct relations like friendship and exchange. If transmitters and adopters see themselves as falling into the same category – i.e. assume that they are not only connected but also fundamentally similar – diffusion of innovation is likely to be robust. In the case of Eastern European civil society activists, however, this assumption was far from straightforward. A number of parallels existed between their countries: a communist past, a hybrid regime type, recently regained statehood, ethnic complexities, a relatively poor economic performance and a corrupt leadership, as well as previous rounds of protests.[31] On the whole, though, it is fair to say that, prior to the democratic breakthroughs, any political analyst comparing the four countries would highlight differences rather than similarities. Unsurprisingly, when they first heard about Otpor's campaign, many Ukrainians and Georgians doubted whether it could be replicated in their own countries, arguing that the circumstances were different.

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29 Anastasiya Bezverkha, Yellow Pora activist, interview by author, Oxford, (February 27, 2008)

30 Doug McAdam & Dieter Rucht, "The Cross-National Diffusion of Movement Ideas", *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 528(July) 1993: 56-74.

31 Bunce and Wolchik, "International Diffusion and Post-communist Electoral Revolutions"

The appearance of similarity had to be – at least in parts – actively constructed and required a cognitive process that Strang and Meyer refer to as "theorization". Theorization is defined as "self-conscious developments and specification of abstract categories and formulation of patterned relationship such as chains of case and effect".[32] In practice, theorization turns diffusion into rational choice by specifying why potential adopters should attend to the behaviour of one group and not another, what effects the practice will have, and why the practice is particularly applicable or needed. To this effect, theorization mitigates the heterogeneity of actors and populations involved in diffusion by making salient the characteristic they share and marginalizing the differences. Ouchi captured the pattern nicely in his discussion of the potential of transfer of a Japanese management style to the USA: "To a specialist in the Japanese society and culture, the differences between Japan and the United States are so great that a borrowing of social organization between them seems impossible. To a student of business organization, however, the underlying similarity in tasks between Japanese and American businesses suggests that some form of the essential characteristics of Japanese companies must be transferable."[33]

Likewise, as far as aspiring revolutionaries and "specialists" in non-violent conflict are concerned, the cross-national similarities they intuitively looked for – and perceived of as particularly salient – naturally resembled those characteristics that are relevant to the prospects of a non-violent regime change. In other words, "theorization" pertained to the parallels in political opportunity structures, namely regime type and incumbent-opposition power relations. According to Ivan Marovic, an Otpor leader who coached Ukrainian Pora activists, "of course, Serbia, Georgia and Ukraine are totally different countries: different histories, different circumstances and different opponents; but they had a common regime type – nominally democratic but in essence autocratic; nature of the problem was very similar."[34]

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32 David Strang and John W. Meyer, "Institutional Conditions for Diffusion", *Theory and Society*, 22(4) 1993: 487-511.

33 Strang and Meyer, "Institutional Conditions for Diffusion", 496.

34 Ivan Marovic, telephone interview by author, January 14, 2008

Hence, because of the parallels in opportunities and challenges facing oppositional movements under such regimes, the range of tasks at hand is similarly generic – i.e. the formation of youth movements that galvanize opposition parties via creative marketing and catchy slogans, participate in the exposure of electoral fraud and spearhead subsequent post-election protests – provided that opposition is sufficiently pro-Western, united and capable of outpolling the incumbent. From the activists' perspective, it matters little whether a country is large or small, ethnically divided or homogenous, post-war or peaceful, post-Soviet or not. This approach is an instructive example of theorization: not only does it formulate a patterned cause-and-effect relationship, but it also assumes that "similar systems respond in consistent ways to environmental inputs", thereby predicting that "similar practices can be adopted by all members of a theoretically defined population, with similar effects".[35]

Theorization was also informed by shared assumptions regarding the logic of post-communist transitions. Most activists believed that problems facing their countries were of a similar kind: corrupt, abusive and incompetent regimes born out of "incomplete transition" from communism that continued to halt political and economic progress. During training seminars in Ukraine, Otpor veteran Milos Milenkovic made Ukrainian activists list the ten greatest problems their country was facing. As he recalled, "out of the ten, eight were usually common for both Serbia and Ukraine".[36] Remedies for the post-communist malaise were also thought to be analogous: a decisive replacement of the existing elites with pro-Western leaders who would set the country back on toward democratic consolidation. The underlying assumption that elite agency is the pre-eminent determinant of democratization – trumping structural and country-specific variables and pre-conditions such as historical legacies, geographic proximity to the West, political culture, levels of economic development – formed the intellectual underpinning of diffusion in coloured revolutions. Also implicit in the thinking of many Eastern European activists was what the literature calls

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35 Strang and Meyer, "Institutional Conditions for Diffusion", 496

36 Milenkovic, interview

"teleological" and "linear" conception of democratization.[37] Serbian, Georgian and Ukrainian activists perceived their struggles against Milosevic, Shevardnadze and Kuchma as essentially the same struggle for democracy's ultimate victory in Eastern Europe and the post-Soviet space.[38]

In the final analysis, it is clear that levels of domestic political opportunities and receptivity to diffusion are closely interlinked. The stronger the pro-Western opposition vis-a-vis incumbents in hybrid regimes, the easier it becomes for local activists to "theorize" parallels with prior successes, and, consequently, the more likely they are to adopt novel practices. This, in turn, feeds into formation of Otpor-style movement in a two-step process. First, is the sheer motivational effect generated by success stories recounted by accomplished revolutionaries. Their versions of causation in Milosevic's or Meciar's defeat also underwent theorization, and usually overemphasized the role of civil society at the expense of other factors. "The motivation was really important for me," said Dmytro Potekhin, senior Ukrainian activist who attended Serbian-run training seminars. "It was this feeling of possibility of changing things with just what you have in your hands and with ordinary people – sometimes brave, sometimes not, sometimes talented, sometimes not."[39] Potekhin's words capture what social movement scholars call "cognitive liberation" and the expansion in "perceived opportunity structures" whereby activists realized that "it doesn't take much to help change the system".[40] This motivational effect – itself, of course, made possible by prior attribution of similarity – was subsequently followed by the actual transfer of particular lessons that pertained to strategic planning, development of organization and recruitment, response to police aggression, stagecraft of street actions, and the design of logos, slogans and campaign materials.

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37 Thomas Carothers, "The End of the Transition Paradigm", *Journal of Democracy*, 13(1) 2002: 5-21

38 Bunce and Wolchik, "International Diffusion and Post-communist Electoral Revolutions"

39 Dmytro, Potekhin, Znayu activist, telephone by author, (March 14, 2008)

40 Balasz, Jarabik, OK98 activist, telephone interview by author, (November 15, 2007)

5. Diffusion to Georgia: Kmara

In terms of the influence on the formation of a social movement and its tactics, transnational diffusion arguably had the greatest resonance in Georgia. The decline of Eduard Shevardnadze's power base and popular support – and the simultaneous rise of opposition parties – engendered unusually favourable opportunities for collective action ahead of the November 2003 parliamentary elections. For the already well-organized activists close to pro-Western opposition, exposure to Otpor's story provided them with what they had hitherto lacked – a clearly defined strategy. In the spring of 2003, they established a youth movement called Kmara ("Enough"). In terms of design, Kmara was the truest copy of the Serbian original: its activists meticulously adopted most of Otpor's strategic thinking, organizational structures and tactics, and even chose Otpor's clenched fist as their symbol. On the other hand, given that Kmara originally targeted the 2005 presidential elections, it had never developed into a truly mass movement, and by November 2003, mustered only 3000 volunteers.[41]

At the time of Kmara's creation in 2003, the power structure that President Shevardnadze had presided over since 1995 had all but fallen apart, and his "electoral autocracy" looked increasingly vulnerable. Until the early 2000s, the relative stability and unity of Georgia's ruling bloc was maintained by the existence of a strong pro-presidential party, the Citizen's Union of Georgia (SMK), and by Shevardnadze acting as an "arbitrator" between the various informal groupings competing for access to power and resources. This arrangement disintegrated in 2001 after the so-called "young reformers" – a pro-Western wing of the SMK backed by the relatively free Georgian media and NGO sector – moved into open opposition against Shevardnadze and the corrupt ex-nomenklatura cadres in the SMK. The fatal rift came in late October when security forces, controlled by the latter group, stormed the building of the independent Rustavi-2 channel on the basis of alleged tax evasion, triggering anti-regime demonstrations in Tbilisi. In response, Mikheil Saakashvili, former justice minister and the most radical of the "young reformists",

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41 Giorgi Kandelaki, Kmara activist, interview by author, London, (January 26, 2008)

decided in November 2001 to create a broad anti-Shevardnadze bloc, the "New National Movement", and Zurab Zhvania, another prominent member of the group, forged an alliance with Nino Burjanadze, the popular speaker of the parliament, to create a new opposition party, the "United Democrats". Meanwhile, the Shevardnadze loyalists attempted to regroup by merging what remained of SMK with a number of smaller parties to an election bloc "For a New Georgia". By 2003, real political power was no longer vested in the "lame duck" president – due to step down after his second term in 2005 – and political actors were by now competing for dominant positions in the post-Shevardnadze period.[42] At this stage, the opposition parties – each enjoying over 20 percent popularity in 2003 pre-election polls – failed to unite.[43] Still, in the face of a fragmented, weak and deeply unpopular Shevardnadze regime – "For a New Georgia" had only the support of between 6 and 9 percent of population, according to polls – the media-savvy opposition was poised to ultimately prevail, either in 2003 or in the 2005 presidential contest.

The palpable shift in the balance of power and the emergence of "influential allies" created a fertile ground for the reception of Serbian revolutionary know-how. The idea of putting Serbian and Georgian activists together originated in the Tbilisi offices of the National Democratic Institute and Open Society Fund. In late 2002, NDI organized an international conference on civil society in Tbilisi, inviting several activists from Serbia, among them Otpor's Slobodan Djinovic, who later presented Otpor's example to civil society leaders at the Liberty Institute, a prominent advocacy group close to the political opposition, which had also been active in developing a network of student organizations campaigning for education reform. Liberty Institute's leaders Levan Ramishvili and Giga Bokeria quickly realized that a non-violent youth movement might have been just the instrument they had been looking for. To some local activists, achieving systemic change still appeared to be rather a "long-shot". They argued that the Serbian example "was irrelevant to Georgia – of

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42 Jaba Devdariani, "Georgia: Rise and Fall of the Facade Democracy", *Demokratizatsiya: The Journal of Post-Soviet Democratization*, 12(1) 2004: 79-115.

43 Unlike in presidential elections, the numerical advantage to be gained from formal unity was less significant in parliamentary elections.

course, Shevardnadze was no Milosevic, Western powers were not as interested and Russia more involved".[44] But in February, during a trip to Belgrade, Liberty Institute leaders, in consultation with Djinovic and other Otpor veterans, devised the blueprint of Kmara. Djinovic himself later returned to Georgia to run three-day courses for activists in a training camp that Kmara set up in a mountain village outside Tbilisi. In October, another Otpor consultant, Alexander Maric, arrived with a task to "fine-tune the organization that Djinovic already trained in basic stuff, and to give them direction".[45] Maric focused on the most practical of issues and coached Georgian activists in the streets. In addition, all Kmara activists watched "Bringing Down the Dictator", an acclaimed documentary on the Bulldozer revolution; other materials they downloaded from Otpor's website.

The role envisaged for Kmara was analogous to that of Otpor: a radical and non-partisan youth movement acting as a "detonator" to break the apathy of the public and reduce the scope for possible compromise between opposition reformists and representatives of Shevardnadze's regime.[46] Upcoming parliamentary elections – the results of which were expected to be manipulated – were seen as an opportunity to gain further momentum and prepare ground for 2005. This emphasis on planning distinguished Kmara from previous anti-regime movements in Georgia. As Georgi Meladze, one of its founders, put it: "Kmara was different because it had a strategy, something that would take you from day one to day hundred; and this we learned from the Serbs."[47] In fact, Georgian activists copied almost every aspect of Otpor's innovation. In terms of its organizational structure, Kmara adopted Otpor's horizontal and cell-based structure. It also used the same campaigning tools, such as graffiti, satirical street performances and get-out-the-vote techniques. Some of the slogans were even left in the

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44 Kandelaki, interview

45 Maric, interview

46 Mathew Collin, *The Time of the Rebels* (London: Serpent's Tail, 2007), 70

47 Giorgi Meladze, Kmara activist, telephone interview by author, (January 21, 2008)

Serbian language, and others represented direct translations.[48] In part, close identification with Otpor was a deliberate strategy, inasmuch as it directly invoked parallels with Milosevic's fall.[49] Robust diffusion was also facilitated by strong perceptions of similarity between transmitters and adopters, both at the personal level and at the level of national contexts. As Maric put it, "Georgia was similar to Serbia, so they did not have to adapt that much. Most of the experience from Serbia could just be copy-pasted to Georgia".[50]

6. Diffusion to Ukraine: Black and Yellow Pora

Unlike in Georgia, where civil society activists – having learned about Otpor at the time of favourable political opportunities – began almost instantly to plan their own movement, diffusion to Ukraine was a more long-term process. It involved both Serbian and Slovak activists.[51] Their experience had been spreading in Ukraine since Meciar's and Milosevic's fall, but it was not until political opportunities expanded in 2003 that Ukrainian activists decided to utilize these strategies fully. Parallel to the process of opposition coalescence around the candidacy of Viktor Yushchenko ahead of the 2004 presidential elections, civic and youth activists began to realize that the experience of their foreign interlocutors was highly relevant to Ukraine. Two groups of Ukrainian activists – one tied to Otpor trainers and one with stronger links to OK98 veterans – formed two separate but closely interlinked movements known as "Black" and "Yellow" Pora ("It's Time").

The failure of Leonid Kuchma's "competitive authoritarianism", as dissected by Way, stemmed from the inability of the president to install effective top-down control in an oligarchic state captured by powerful economic interests and plagued by "rapacious

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48 In choosing Otpor's fist as their own symbol, Georgians even acted against the advice of Djinovic and Maric, who advocated an original symbol so that Kmara could be perceived by the public as an "autochthonous". Maric, interview

49 Kandelaki, interview

50 Maric, interview

51 Several activists from Kmara also took part in training workshops in Ukraine, but their influence on movement formation was not as significant.

individualism".[52] Without a viable party of power or otherwise cohesive ruling organization, the equilibrium in which the president acted as an umpire over competing clans, backed by a loose coalition of oligarchic parties,[53] grew progressively more unstable in the early 2000s, bringing about shifts in political alignments as Kuchma's former allies – prime ministers as well as oligarchs – gradually moved into opposition against him. This process was also encouraged by Kuchma's falling popularity, especially in the aftermath of the Gongadze affair of 2000 and the subsequent wave of mass protests in Kiev. The dynamics of opposition coalescence gained momentum after the reformist Prime Minister Yushchenko was voted out of office in April 2001 and the anti-Kuchma "Our Ukraine" bloc was set up shortly afterwards. Yet the emergence of "influential allies" – dubbed the "Orange" coalition – was far from straightforward. Yushchenko, himself a former Kuchma loyalist, failed to forge a coalition with the more radical opposition forces, led by Yulia Tymoshenko, ahead of the 2002 parliamentary elections. In the end, it was partly due to the relentless attacks on the part of the Kuchma administration that prompted Yushchenko to agree on close cooperation with Tymoshenko ahead of the 2004 presidential elections. In the meantime, a number of influential oligarchs – most notably, Petro Poroshenko, Oleksandr Zinchenko and apparently even Kuchma's son-in-law Viktor Pinchuk – defected from the camp of the "lame duck" president and switched sides to the opposition. This clearly reflected the increased expectations of Yushchenko's prospective victory: in June 2003, his support was at 35 percent, compared with 14 percent for Viktor Yanukovych, Kuchma's designated successor.[54] In August 2004, Yushchenko and Tymoshenko cemented their cooperation by forming the "People's Power Coalition", and agreeing on the former as the opposition's single presidential candidate.

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52 Lucan A. Way, "Kuchma's Failed Authoritarianism", *Journal of Democracy*, 16(2) 2005: 131-145.

53 Taras Kuzio, "Regime Type and Politics in Ukraine under Kuchma", *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, 38(2) 2005: 167-190.

54 Adrian Karatnycky, "The Fall and Rise of Ukraine's Political Opposition: From Kuchmagate to the Orange Revolution", in *Revolution in Orange*, ed. Anders Aslund and Michael McFaul (Washington: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2006), 37.

In the meantime, the idea of creating an Otpor-style movement took relatively long to prevail within Ukrainian civil society, no doubt reflecting the protracted road to unity at the level of opposition parties. First contacts with veterans of Slovak and Serbian campaigns took place as early as 1999 and 2001: civic leaders from Kiev forged links with OK98 representatives in March 1999 at a knowledge-sharing workshop in Bratislava, and remained in close contact thereafter; separately, Milos Milenkovic, Otpor's recruitment specialist, was invited in March 2001 to organize training seminars for Ukrainian youth activists.[55] In the course of two years, Milenkovic – together with three other Otpor trainers, Nenad Belcevic, Alexander Maric and Sinisa Sikman – conducted 23 two-day seminars across the country, exposing over 700 Ukrainian activists to Otpor's story and methodology, albeit without any explicit aim to encourage movement formation.[56] Indeed, at the time, creating an all-Ukrainian organization akin to Otpor initially seemed unfeasible to most of local youth and NGO leaders. The main argument, recurring throughout discussions in 2001 and 2002, was that Serbian methods would not work because Ukraine lacked a united and strong opposition. As one Slovak advisor in Ukraine pointed out, "there was no point in mobilization" ahead of either 1999 or 2002 elections because there was simply no political alternative.[57] By mid-2003, however, this outlook changed significantly. As the collaboration of opposition parties deepened, it became increasingly evident that 2004 presidential elections would be a two-horse race between Yushchenko and whomever the authorities decided to put it. [58] Hence, the core group of Ukrainian youth activists and Serbian visitors concluded that – as Alexander Maric put it – "we need a big organization that will take it one step further".[59]

Unlike in Georgia, anti-regime efforts in Ukraine did not represent a single movement. On the one hand, leaders of youth organizations – mainly groups from Western Ukraine who took

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55 Milenkovic, interview

56 Oleh Kyriyenko, Black Pora activist, telephone interview by author, (January 10, 2008)

57 Demes, interview

58 Andrew Wilson, *Ukraine's Orange Revolution* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), 70

59 Maric, interview

part in the radical anti-Kuchma "For Truth" committee formed in the wake of the Gongadze affair – began planning their own movement in mid-autumn 2003, known as Black Pora, modelled closely on Otpor and Kmara, and devised in collaboration with Serbian and later Georgian activists. The final preparation workshop took place in April 2004 in Novi Sad, Maric's hometown in northern Serbia, attended by 18 youth leaders from various Ukrainian regions, and four senior Otpor veterans. Independently of the Serbian-trained groups – but inspired partly by the OK98 campaign in Slovakia – seasoned civic activists around Vladislav Kaskiv and the "Freedom of Choice" coalition in Kiev began planning their own large-scale project: a broad-based nationwide campaign of coalitions of NGOs entitled "Wave of Freedom" that combined elements of voter education, monitoring and get-out-the-vote. The voter mobilization drive, effectively a social movement of its own, later became known as the Yellow Pora; its "federal" organizational structure, overall moderate or positive campaign messages and an emphasis on professional handling of the media drew significantly on the Slovak experience.[60] Black Pora, by contrast, strictly applied Otpor's grass-root model of a loose horizontal structure based on autonomous cells, focused largely on negative campaigning via stickers, graffiti or satirical street performances, and rarely talked to journalists. As far as the broader public was concerned, activists of both wings were keen to ensure that there is only one "Pora". Institutionally, however, Black and Yellow Pora never fully united. In part, their parallel emergence and campaigning was rooted in the nature of diffusion and the separate influences of Serbian and Slovak examples.

7. Conclusion

This article examined the process of intra-regional diffusion that underpinned civil society mobilization in the recent democratic breakthroughs in the post-Soviet world. It argued for a narrow conception of diffusion in coloured revolutions that focuses on the spread of specific mobilization techniques as opposed to a wholesale "electoral model" of regime change. The adoption of

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60 Vladislav Kaskiv, Iryna Chupryna, Yevhen Zolotariov, "It's Time! Pora and the Orange Revolution in Ukraine", in *Reclaiming Democracy*, ed. Joerg Forbrig, Pavol Demes (Washington: German Marshall Fund, 2007), 137

these techniques by activists in Georgia and Ukraine was facilitated by favourable political opportunity structures at home: an inherently unstable "hybrid regime" and splits in the ruling elite that weakened the incumbent leader and paved the way for a formidable pro-Western opposition to emerge. Diffusion itself was channelled by interpersonal contact between activists and reinforced by their structural equivalence. However, given the structural diversity of recipient countries, actors needed to actively construct cross-national parallels – to realize that they are not only connected but also fundamentally similar, i.e. situated in analogous settings. This perception was, in turn, made possible in part by the similar nature of political opportunity structures in Georgia and Ukraine prior to elections in 2003 and 2004, respectively. Without attribution of similarity, examples of Serbian Otpor or Slovak OK98 campaigns would hardly appear motivational and inspirational to Georgian and Ukrainian activists. Finally, the two brief case studies sought to illustrate how opportunity structures and diffusion affected the dynamics of movement emergence: in Georgia, the formation of an Otpor-style youth movement was swift and straightforward, while in Ukraine, it was longer and multi-layered.

The campaigns of Kmara and Pora no doubt represent an important milestone in the development of post-Soviet civil society, but they should not be interpreted as indicative of its profound transformation and lasting political influence. As this article argued, mobilization in coloured revolution owed much of its dynamism and effectiveness to the permissive nature of domestic political environment and effects of transnational diffusion. The "black-and-white" picture of political struggle in the pre-election period provided a unique opportunity for youth movements and NGOs to step in and influence the course of events. However, in the more complex and nuanced political reality of the post-revolutionary period, neither Pora nor Kmara managed to retain their independence and leverage, let alone membership base: the former attempted to enter party politics but suffered a humiliating defeat in the 2006 parliamentary elections; the latter dissolved and many of its leading activists joined Mr Saakashvili's new administration, which further weakened Georgia's civil society and its position vis-a-vis the

state.[61] More broadly, despite its proven capacity to mobilize against undemocratic leaders, post-Soviet civil society remains "distinctly weak", lacking the vibrancy, organizational density and depth to serve the array of functions critical to the process of democratic consolidation requires.

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61 Laurence Broers, "After the 'Revolution': Civil Society and the Challenges of Consolidating Democracy in Georgia", Central Asian Survey, 24(3) 2005: 333-350

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STRENGTHENING THE ENP THROUGH REGIONAL CIVIL SOCIETY COOPERATION

The Case for the Inclusion of a Regional Civil Society Component into the European Neighbourhood Policy in the South Caucasus

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Abstract[1]

In this article, we argue that the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) has to be considered and evaluated as a structural foreign policy that seeks to influence political, legal, socio-economic, security and mental structures over the long-term, rather than being a conventional foreign policy, focussing on states, military crises and conflicts (Keukeleire and MacNaughtan, 2008). We stress that, if the ENP wants to be effective as a structural foreign policy in the South Caucasus, it needs to enhance its attention for regional civil society cooperation. We develop an innovative framework, illustrating the potential of regional civil society cooperation on three levels: the substate (i.e. the relations between the societies of the 'nation state' and their break-away regions), the transstate (i.e. the relations between the societies of the three South Caucasian states) and the international level (i.e. the relations between the region and international actors). Our main argument is that through an enhanced attention for civil society cooperation by financing and coordinating projects and activities on these three levels, the EU should empower civil society and instrumentalize it as one of the keys to turn the ENP into an effective structural foreign policy.

1. Introduction

In August 2008, the defrosting of the South Ossetian and Abkhazian conflicts was the latest episode in a number of rising

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1 The authors are grateful to Arnout Justaert and the anonymous reviewers for their constructive comments during the writing of this article.

and declining tensions in the South Caucasus since the independence of Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia in the early nineties. The European Union (EU) is a fairly recent new actor in the region. Hampered by its relatively limited room for external action compared to classical nation states, it has struggled to form a coherent and robust policy towards the South Caucasus.. The main EU policy covering the region, the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), is characterized by its technical and financial nature rather than an involvement in the Caucasian high politics. The rather explicit and unequivocal support of the United States (US) and Russia for certain regional actors is more manifest and leads to a much more obvious and direct perceived impact. At first sight, the EU appears then to be a second rank actor lacking strength and credibility.

In this article we argue that the EU should not try to emulate the regional policies of nation states such as Russia or the US. Instead, the EU could turn its liabilities into assets. The characteristics of the EU as a sui generis international organisation may hamper its abilities compared to traditional nation states, but it also opens up opportunities. The lack of vigour on the level of high politics enfeebles policies in other domains (such as economics, democratization and human rights) less than is the case with foreign policies of traditional nation states. If the EU proves successful in creating a novel sort of foreign policy based on its particularity it could stand a chance in the whirl of political events in the South Caucasus.

In the first sections of this article we will analyze the nature of the ENP, inspired by the distinction made by Keukeleire and MacNaughtan between conventional and structural foreign policy.[2] Is a *conventional* conception of *foreign policy,* focusing solely on 'states, crises and military conflicts' an adequate starting point for the analysis of the ENP? Or should we analyze the ENP from a *structural foreign policy* perspective, in the sense that it 'aims to influence long-term changes in political, legal, socio-economic, security and mental structures'.

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2 Stephan Keukeleire and Jennifer MacNaughtan, The Foreign Policy of the European Union (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 25-8.

In the latter sections of this article we will take a closer look at the role civil society can play in the fulfilment of the ENP goals, in particular for the aspect of regional cooperation. We will do this by presenting three different levels (subnational, transstate and international) on which a transnational Caucasian civil society could emerge. Briefly touching upon examples for each level, we will illustrate the potential for civil society cooperation on these three levels to contribute to the political and socio-economic development of the region, as well as to the fulfilment of the structural foreign policy goals of the ENP.

2. The EU, the South Caucasus and the ENP

The first relations between the EU and the South Caucasian countries were developed within the TACIS-programme and specific regional programmes immediately after the declarations of independence of the latter. In 1999 the relations went further with the signing of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreements with Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia. These PCA's still serve as the legal basis for relations between the governments and the EU. The South Caucasus was initially not included when the ENP was launched in 2004. However, this changed in 2006 with the conclusion of the bilateral ENP Action Plans that set out an agenda for political and economic reforms. Taking in the South Caucasian countries was mainly driven by Georgia's Rose Revolution in 2003, where the call for democratization and a turn towards Europe were the mainstay of the promised new approach of President Saakashvili. The ENP offers possibilities for more far-reaching cooperation and therefore reflects in a way the changing relationship between the South Caucasus and the EU. Whereas in the early nineties this region was seen as conflict prone with failed states needing humanitarian aid, the EU now mainly sees this area as an important source for energy, a growing economic market, strategically located between Russia and the Middle East and a bridgehead for regional democratization[3]. The question is if the ENP will be sufficient to cope with these divergent objectives and if more material interests will not dispel norms and values from the ENP-agenda.

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3 Sebastian Mayer, *Die Europäische Union im Südkaukasus. Interessen und Institutionen in der Auswärtigen Politikgestaltung* (Berlin: Nomos Verlag, 2005), 107.

The EU is keen to stress that the ENP is distinct from the process of enlargement. However, when the two policies are compared to each other, a number of recurring characteristics can be perceived. One could consider the ENP as a spin-off of the enlargement process and thus a case susceptible to path dependency.[4] Despite the parallels between the enlargement process and the ENP there is one crucial difference between the two policies and that is their respective finality. Whereas accession talks had membership as a fixed set goal, the ultimate objective of the ENP is less clear. This reduces the leverage the EU has over the partner countries as it no longer is able, or willing, to offer the 'golden carrot of membership'. If the EU has nothing attractive to offer the ENP countries in the short run, the appeal to invest in a potential painful democratization and other reforms required in the Action Plans is very faint. This limits the capacity of the EU to conduct an effective structural foreign policy through its ENP.[5]

3. The ENP and democracy promotion

The EU has been an organization for and of democratic states from the outset, but it did not make political conditionality with regards to democracy a cornerstone of its external relations until the membership applications from Greece, Spain and Portugal in the seventies. The successful democratic consolidation of these countries seemed to confirm the pivotal role the EU can play in promoting democracy. The fall of communism would provide a rich opportunity to test this hypothesis. The EU responded with the establishment of tailor made institutions as the EBRD, TACIS and PHARE and the signing of Association Agreements between the post Soviet states and the EU; all of them contained elements of conditionality and democratization. The next step of offering actual membership went further with the explicit criterion of democracy enshrined in the Copenhagen criteria. At the end of the process, the new member states joined the EU and their political systems were classified as consolidated democracies.

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4 Judith Kelly, "New Wine in Old Wineskins: Promoting Reforms Through the New ENP," *Journal of Common Market Studies* 44, no. 1 (2006): 29-55.

5 Keukeleire and MacNaughtan, The Foreign Policy of the EU, 270-2. See also Roland Dannreuther, "Developing the Alternative to Enlargement: the European Neighbourhood Policy," *European Foreign Affairs Review* 11 (2006): 183-201.

This apparent success story could be harder to achieve in the future for the EU.[6]

In May 2004 the European Commission launched the ENP through its ENP Strategy Paper. In this constitutive document, "commitment to specific actions which confirm or reinforce adherence to shared values"[7] is stated as the first of two priority areas for the ENP. Further on in the text these values are listed as strengthening democracy, respect for human rights, support for the development of civil society, cooperation with the International Criminal Court and cooperation with regards to the EU's external action.[8] Democratization and the development of civil society thus had a prominent place from the onset, but in order to take effect this should trickle down to the Country Reports and Action Plans which serve as the basis for actual policy-making. The Country Reports emphasize legislative reform and liberalisation; judicial and economic sectors dominate the texts. However, the Reports also contain two fairly extensive sections on democracy and human rights which appear fairly direct and concrete. Although the Commission produced Reports served as a starting point for the Action Plans, the latter seem to miss the rigour and details in which value gaps were identified in the initial Reports.[9] The Action Plan for Georgia, for example, mentions eight priority areas and only lists democratization as a complementary action. Civil society is only mentioned sideways, while a coherent strategy towards the development and inclusion of civil society is lacking.[10] This shows how the stress put on democratization and civil society empowerment at the highest level of policy making is not being translated into concrete terms.[11]

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6 Paul J. Kubicek, *The European Union and Democratization* (London: Routledge, 2003), 10.

7 European Commission, Communication from the Commission "European Neighbourhood Policy" Strategy Paper, COM(2004) 373 final, (12 May 2004), 9.

8 European Commission, ENP Strategy Paper, 13.

9 Giselle Bosse, "Values in the EU's Neighbourhood Policy" European Political Economy Review 7 (2007): 38-62.

10 European Commission, EU/Georgia Action Plan, November 2006, http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/pdf/action_plans/georgia_enp_ap_final_en.pdf.

11 For a more comprehensive analysis of the shortcomings of EU aid to civil society, see Kristi Raik, "Promoting Democracy Through Civil Society: How to Step up the EU's Policy towards the Eastern Neighbourhood," CEPS Working Document, No. 237 (February 2006), 18-21.

In addition, the intergovernmental nature of the negotiations of the Action Plans also led to the absence of involvement from NGOs and civil society in general. This was not only a missed opportunity to create an opening for civil society in the countries concerned, but it also contradicts the stated aims of the ENP as mentioned above to support the development of civil society. After fierce protesting from civil society organisations, the EU has put effort into including civil society in the ENP in a more active way. Meetings between EU officials and NGO representatives are organised in ENP countries to strengthen ties and civil society representatives were invited to the European Commission ENP conference in September 2007.[12] Although these are first steps to improve dialogue, civil society remains a secondary actor in the mainly bilateral ENP process.

4. ENP as a structural foreign policy

When analyzing the EU's policy towards the South Caucasus, it is important to take into account the nature of its specific policy instrument: the ENP. We therefore point to the distinction Keukeleire and MacNaughtan[13] make between a conventional and a structural foreign policy. The concept of *structural foreign policy* is defined as 'a foreign policy which, conducted over the long-term, seeks to influence or shape sustainable *political*, *legal*, *socio-economic*, *security* and *mental* structures. These structures characterize not only states and interstate relations, but also societies, the position of individuals, relations between states and societies, and the international system as a whole'[14]. This concept is juxtaposed to *conventional foreign policy*, which, according to the definition of Keukeleire and MacNaughtan, 'is orientated towards states, military crises and conflicts'. Structural foreign policy differs from conventional foreign policy in the sense that it is not focussing solely on what we call high politics. Instead it seeks to influence the target state in such a way that the afore-mentioned structures in this state become assimilated with those of the acting state. If these efforts are successful, as a consequence, the political, legal, socio-economic, security and

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12 European Commission, Reflections from Civil Society representatives, European Commission ENP Conference, (3 September 2007), 7.

13 Keukeleire and MacNaughtan, *The Foreign Policy of the European Union*, 25-8.

14 Ibid., 25-26.

mental system will gravitate towards cooperative relations with the acting state. Keukeleire and MacNaughtan stress that the two kinds of foreign policy differ on the main features of a structural foreign policy. First, as the name says, a structural foreign policy focuses on *structures* (such as democracy, capitalism, rule of law, etc.) and the way these are put into practice (e.g. existing differences in the elaboration of democracy between the US and Switzerland). Second, structural foreign policy needs to be *comprehensive*. This includes not just influencing the different structures (i.e. political, legal, socio-economic, security and mental), but influencing them on all levels on which they manifest themselves (i.e. individual, state, societal, state-society relations, interregional and global). Keukeleire and MacNaughtan put these levels and structures into a simple checklist (see figure 1) to evaluate the comprehensiveness of a structural foreign policy:

Figure 1: Structural foreign policy: structures and levels

		STRUCTURES				
		Political	Legal	Socio-economic	Security	Mental
L	Individual					
E	State					
V	Societal*					
E	Inter-state					
L	Inter-societal*					
	(Inter)-regional					
S	Global					

* Societies can be situated within one state or can be transnational.

Source: Keukeleire and MacNaughtan, *The Foreign Policy of the EU*, 28.

Third, structures have to be changed in such a way that they are *sustainable*, even after pressure or support has disappeared. This sustainability is very much dependent on the *mental structure*. If changes are seen as legitimate, chances for sustainability will rise. Although this is not particularly mentioned by Keukeleire and MacNaughtan, we argue these mental structures are one of the points where the importance of the inclusion and development of

civil society comes in.[15] A well-rooted civil society has the potential of influencing the mental structures of society at large. The inclusion of civil society actors in the elaboration of a structural foreign policy thus can function as a first step towards larger mentality changes. Furthermore, on various topics concerning human rights, democratization and civil society development, civil society organisations share the same values and commitments the EU wants to build its ENP relations on. By including these local actors into a structural foreign policy, positive synergies can emerge. Taking into account the caveats concerning the relations of NGOs with international organisations and their embeddedness in the local society at large, the positive effects of including civil society into a structural foreign policy should not be overlooked.

When looking at EU policies towards the South Caucasus, it needs to be pointed out that Keukeleire and MacNaughtan clearly indicate that structural and conventional foreign policy are not mutually contradictory. On the contrary, both policy styles prove to be complementary and even mutually dependent. The EU in the South Caucasus can best be described as an actor that aims to be active in both conceptions of foreign policy. During the August 2008 war in Georgia, the French EU presidency set itself up as a mediator between Russia and Georgia, trying to broker a peace deal through intensive diplomacy efforts. In this way, the EU was engaging in the conflict through a conventional foreign policy style of peace settlement. However, we argue that with the ENP, the EU also aims to be active with a typical structural foreign policy tool, at least when considering the initial goals of the ENP. The goal of the ENP is to create a ring of stable and friendly nations, which gravitate towards an increasingly close relationship with the EU[16], by building on the mutual commitment to common values[17]. De facto this means enhancing or transposing 'EU-values' into the ENP-countries by influencing political (such as

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15 It has to be pointed out that mental structures are not the only structures in which civil society plays a decisive role. For a more extensive account of the role of civil society in the EU's Eastern Neighbourhood, see Kristi Raik, "Promoting Democracy Through Civil Society," 1-14. Raik goes back to the famous works of Alexis de Tocqueville, Democracy in America (Wordsworth), and Robert D. Putnam, *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press).

16 European Commission, ENP Strategy Paper, 5.

17 Ibid., 3.

good governance, democracy, human rights), legal (rule of law), socio-economic (market economy, sustainable development), security (good neighbourly relations) and mental structures in such a way that cooperation with EU structures becomes the most logical policy option. Following the definition of Keukeleire and MacNaughtan (supra), we can thus consider the general framework of the ENP as being a structural foreign policy in its goals. Whether the ENP is successful in fulfilling these goals in its relationships with the different countries, and could thus be considered a structural foreign policy in its effects, is yet another question.

In the remainder of this article we will focus on the transformation of mental structures towards cooperation in the South Caucasus region. Starting from the framework of structural foreign policy, we will see how civil society can contribute to changing these structures by cooperating across *de jure* and *de facto* borders, hereby enhancing more positive ideas about cooperation on the different levels.

5. A structural ENP and the need for regional cooperation

The enhancement of regional cooperation is consistent with the vision of the ENP as a structural foreign policy. The EU is in itself an entity based on highly developed cooperation in a wide array of fields. In the five structures that are said to be of relevance for a structural foreign policy, the EU system is internally characterized by a certain extent of cooperation. Extending EU structures beyond the EU external borders thus implies extending a willingness to cooperate. This benevolence cannot be solely oriented towards the EU, but also has to be oriented towards direct neighbouring states in the region that do not form part of the EU. We therefore argue that the transposition of ideas of regional cooperation into the political, legal, socio-economic, security and in particular mental structures is a prerequisite for the success of the ENP in the South Caucasus. This is confirmed in the ENP Action Plans that were concluded in 2006 with Armenia, Georgia and Azerbaijan. As is included in all three of these Action Plans, one of the policy priorities of the EU towards these countries is the promotion of regional cooperation.

Regional cooperation needs to be seen as mutually beneficial for both the EU and the different regional actors. On the one hand,

the EU wants to create a ring of stable and friendly nations. On the other hand, regional cooperation among the countries of the South Caucasus has the potential of seriously enhancing their socio-economic development and their political weight when negotiating with the EU. Whereas the South Caucasus as a region has potentially heavy levers in the geopolitical field of energy transport, the different countries are currently involved in mutually detrimental competition. For example, De Waal calls the political stand-off between Armenia and Azerbaijan 'a kind of slow suicide pact in which each country hurts the other, while suffering itself'[18].

At this moment regional cooperation in the South Caucasus is very limited. The lack of willingness to cooperate in high level political fields, due to tensions over the so-called frozen conflicts and inter-state conflicts, cascades down to lower governmental levels.[19] As societal identity in the region is largely based on the depiction of the other state, society and citizens as the 'common enemy', the lack of cooperation largely persists in civil society as well. An additional hindrance to cooperation is the fact that it is passively and actively undermined by state authorities, who have clearly indicated they are opposed to civil society cooperation[20] and in certain cases have even intimidated NGO-actors that try to cooperate nonetheless.[21] However, from a sustainable peace building perspective, necessary for the success of the EU's structural foreign policy and the region's larger development, regional cooperation is indispensable as cooperation on *low political* issues could facilitate *high political* conflict resolution. In

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18 Thomas de Waal, Black Garden. Armenia and Azerbaijan through Peace and War (New York: New York University Press, 2003), 3.

19 On the potential for and problems of regional cooperation in the South Caucasus, see S. Neil MacFarlane and Albrecht Schnabel, Human Security and Regional (Non-)Cooperation in the Southern Caucasus, Paper presented at The 46th Annual Convention of the International Studies Association, March 1-5, 2005, Honolulu, Hawaii, USA.

20 E.g. the Azerbaijani president Heydar Aliyev stated the following in 1999 about civil society cooperation on the Nagorno Karabakh issue: 'for as long as we have not signed a peace agreement with Armenia there is no need for cooperation between our NGOs and Armenians. When Kocharian and I resolve the issue, it will inevitably involve compromises with which many will disagree. Then let NGOs reconcile the people' as cited in Avaz Hasanov and Armine Ishkanian, "Bridging Divides: Civil Society Peacebuilding Initiatives" in The Limits of Leadership. Elites and Societies in the Nagorny Karabach Peace Process. Accord, 17 (2005), ed. Laurence Broers, Conciliation Resources, 46.

21 Avaz Hasanov and Armine Ishkanian, "Bridging divides," 44-7.

particular the creation of economic ties between countries and regions is often cited as a means to raise mutual trust and promote confidence-building, for example, by opening borders and establishing official trade relations.[22] Other areas where cooperation could make a large contribution to long-term peace building are issues such as the environment and the return of and relief for refugees.

6. Changing mental structures, towards regional civil society cooperation

Various actors can play a role in addressing the apparent need for an enhanced regional cooperation in the heavily fragmented South Caucasian societies. Among these actors we find civil society organisations, that, through their initiatives, can play a stimulating role by changing mental structures about cooperation in the region. In the context of the South Caucasus, we distinguish three different levels on which we see a role for civil society actors to engage in regional cooperation (see figure 2).

Figure 2: Regional Caucasian civil society

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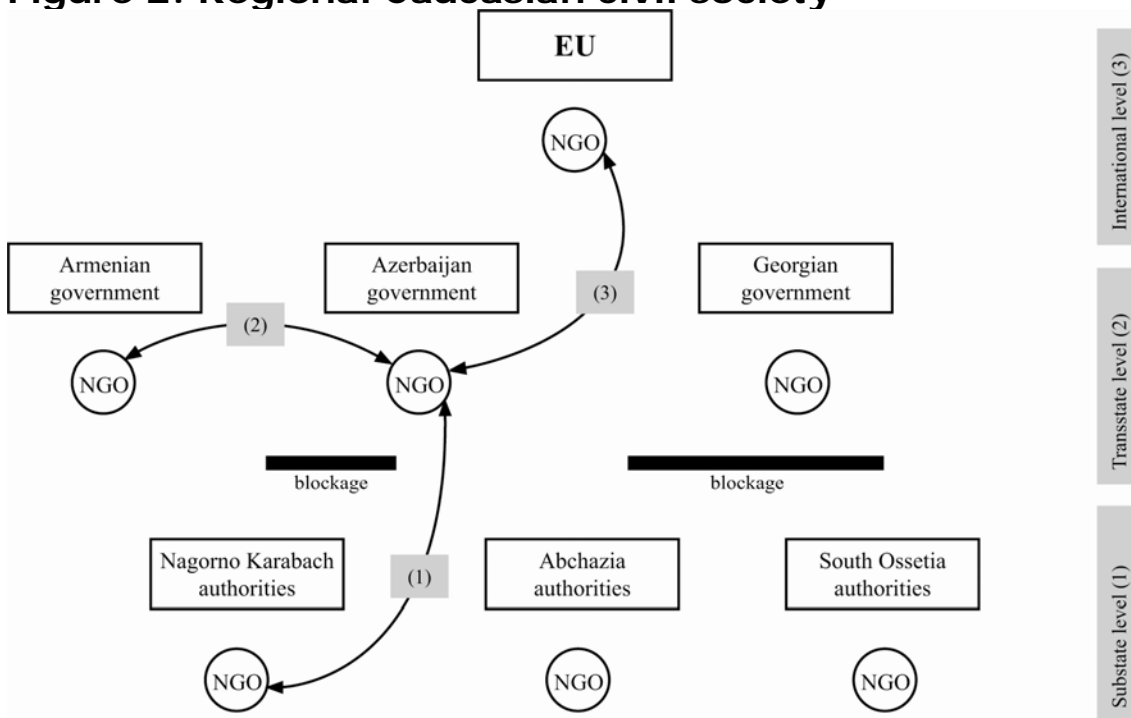
22   Burcu Gültekin, "Necessary cross-border cooperation," Caucaz.com, January 8, 2007, http://www.caucaz.com/home_eng/breve_contenu.php?id=290.

Inspired by: Margaret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink, *Activists beyond borders* (London: Cornell University Press, 1998), 13.

The first level we distinguish is the *substate level* (1). This level is situated within the *de jure* borders of an internationally recognized state, but crosses *de facto* borders within this state and its break-away regions (i.e. the frozen conflicts). By cooperating on this level, civil society can be a front-runner in alleviating the tensions between these strictly separated societal and political entities. The second level is the *transstate level* (2). We situate this level across the borders of the internationally recognized states, involving all kinds of actors. Hereby we mean including different national NGOs, but in some instances also low level government officials. Due to the heavy political tensions over the frozen conflicts, this seems unachievable at the substate level. At the transstate level, this inclusion creates a new opportunity to change mental structures by upwards diffusion into high levels of government. The third level is the *international level* (3). We situate this level within the relations between civil society and international organisations. At this level civil society organisations from the South Caucasus can cooperate to pool their weight in order to have a stronger voice in the international playing field (e.g. during negotiations between the respective states and the EU). This cooperation can also include international NGOs that share the same ideas or values and thus form a sort of transnational advocacy network[23].

The distinctions between these three levels are chosen as they are considered apt to the political situation in the South Caucasus. Moreover, the levels illustrate the various mechanisms through which regional civil society cooperation can change mental structures[24] and how the ENP could include civil society in order to become a more effective structural foreign policy. Our operationalization is distinct from the levels distinguished by Keukeleire and MacNaughtan, as we consider this new distinction more apt for our prescriptive policy approach, as opposed to a pure theoretical assessment.

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23 Margaret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink, Activists beyond borders (London: Cornell University Press, 1998), 1.

24 Ondrej Císar. "Between the national and supranational? Transnational political activism, conflict, and cooperation in the integrated Europe" : Contemporary European Studies, no.1 (2007): 25.

7. Cooperation at the substate level

With cooperation at the substate level we mean cooperation within one country between civil society groups of the main societal entity and the country's break-away regions. We argue that this cooperation can lead to a better understanding between the societies of the different countries and their break-away regions. A question that arises is to how this cooperation should occur in practice. In our point of view, and as is demonstrated by some of the cooperation initiatives thus far, the best way in achieving this enhanced understanding is through concrete on-the-field action in clearly identified topics. By bringing together people from various societal backgrounds to tackle a specific problem of the participants' daily lives, these people learn to cooperate while working towards a clearly defined target of mutual interest. By creating this partnership relation, mutual trust can grow in a cooperative atmosphere. When this first step is taken, we come to a stage where a further opening-up of mindsets and ideas becomes possible. In this stage the participants can become more familiar with their partners' background, what provokes an improved understanding of the 'enemy' society at large. This creates the potential for participants in projects to adopt a *front-runner role* in promoting more nuanced ideas as opposed to the currently dominant 'enemy' stereotypes and thus changing mental structures at a(n) (inter)societal level. Because of the prevailing reluctance against this type of cooperation, which may be due to governmental pressure as well as attitudes among civil society actors themselves[25], an empowering role is to be taken up by international actors.

An example of such substate level cooperation is the 'Dialogue Through Film' project, which is a joint collaboration by the international NGO Conciliation Resources that launched and finances the project and three local NGOs: Internews Armenia, Internews Azerbaijan and the Stepanakert Press Club (Nagorno Karabakh). The initiative brings together 20 young people, coming from Azerbaijan and Nagorno Karabakh, to make short films reflecting the daily life and problems of people on both sides

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25 Avaz Hasanov and Armine Ishkanian, o.c.

affected by the conflict. By organising joint training sessions and creating the possibility of getting in contact with each others' daily life stories through the content of the films, the participants become familiar with their counterparts' problems and background. This way, the project aims to 'bridge the divide' between these substate societies. The potential of this type of cooperation is demonstrated by the reactions of the participants: "When we started the project we were five Azeris and five Karabakhis, now at the end we are ten journalists"; or, "Once we'd worked through all those emotions we were able to start talking to one another like normal people. (...) On a purely human level I can tell you that when you are able to talk normally to one person, then through that contact you start to think differently about his whole nation too".[26]

The EU and its ENP could play a role in fostering these kind of projects by engaging in financing and coordination. As Kristi Raik points out, some of the main obstacles for the EU in involving civil society in the ENP are the insufficient human and organisational resources for allocating assistance.[27] It seems therefore advisable that the European Commission cooperate with existing organisations that possess these human and organisational resources, but often lack the financial resources to act on a larger scale.[28]

8. Cooperation at the transstate level

A second level on which the South Caucasian civil society can or should cooperate is the transstate level. We consider cooperation at this level to be the cooperation between national NGOs working with their regional counterparts in other South Caucasian countries on specific issues of common concern. An interesting feature of this level is the possibility for inclusion of low level government officials. Whereas, due to the highly sensitive nature of the 'frozen conflicts', this type of government inclusion is currently unachievable at the substate level, it is indeed taking place at the transstate level. This is important as it complements

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26 Conciliation Resources, "Breaking Down Barriers Through Film" (2007), http://www.c-r.org/our-work/caucasus/dialogue_through_film.php [accessed at October 28, 2008].

27 Kristi Raik, *Promoting Democracy Through Civil Society*, 19-20.

28 These ideas are largely based on the findings during field research by the authors in Georgia and Azerbaijan (November 2007) and Armenia (March-April 2008).

civil society's mediating role as a societal *front-runner* with a potential *upwards diffusion effect* within government structures. By including low level officials in transstate cooperative initiatives, more nuanced ideas about regional cooperation can emerge among them. In a next step, these ideas can be spread towards higher state levels.

We can illustrate this potential of cooperation at the transstate level with the cooperation regarding water resource management in the Kura-Araks basin. This basin covers most of the territories of the three countries and good joint management is therefore vital for the environmental safety (in terms of water quality and quantity) of the South Caucasus. The importance of the issue was demonstrated during the war over Nagorno Karabakh when both sides used drinking water contamination as a military technique. These experiences have contributed to the persistent lack of trust in the region.[29] Despite the countries' interdependence and therefore obvious need for cooperation, regional action is unlikely to take place without international involvement due to the enduring tensions in the region.[30] Therefore, international organisations have to take the lead in organizing and funding projects. The most important projects in place at the moment are the EU TACIS - UNDP *Joint River Management Projects*, the NATO – OSCE *South Caucasus River Monitoring Project* and USAID's *South Caucasus Water Management Project*. In these projects low level officials, researchers, international organisations and other independent actors (such as local NGOs) cooperate on a technical level to enhance sustainable water resource management.[31] Vener and Campana have conducted research[32] on this technical level cooperation and clearly demonstrate their conciliatory potential. They find that most of the participants of these projects

29 How these experiences still play a role in today's conflict resolution efforts was stressed once more at a lecture by Eduard Atanesian, vice-minister of foreign affairs of the authorities of Nagorno Karabakh Republic, Antwerp, Belgium (October 16, 2008).

30 Interview by the authors, Yerevan (April 4, 2008).

31 Berrin Basak Vener and Michael E. Campana. "Conflict, Cooperation, and the New 'Great Game' in the Kura-Araks Basin of the South Caucasus" (paper presented at the Annual Conference of the Universities Council on Water Resources/National Institutes for Water Resources (UCOWR/NIWR), Durham, NC), 2-5. Available at http://water.oregonstate.edu/projects/2008/Vener_Campana.pdf.

32 Vener and Campana base their findings on in-depth interviews with 30 water experts from NGOs, government agencies, international organisations, research institutes and the private sector from the South Caucasus, conducted in July 2005.

(both from civil society and government agencies) were very positive about their cooperation *as individuals* on the technical level. More than 85% of their respondents indicated that there are other prospective areas in which the South Caucasus countries could work together. Even on the most sensitive issue at the transstate level, the conflict over Nagorno Karabakh, individuals from all three countries indicated willingness to cooperate to find a solution. These findings demonstrate the integrative and conciliatory potential of cooperation on clearly identified technical issues. As Vener and Campana put it:

> Water may provide the means to obtain peace in the region. Regional cooperation on the water resources of the Kura-Araks Basin may not only set the framework for comprehensive management of water resources in the South Caucasus but also may lead to a peaceful environment in the region.[33]

In the context of this project, it is important to stress the openness of the respondents towards a structural role of the EU in the management of the basin. Most of the experts in all three countries (57%) indicated that the basin should be managed in the three countries within the same European Union standards, laid down in the European Union Water Framework Directive.[34] We see that in this case mental structures have not only changed towards regional cooperation, but also towards the role and the involvement of the EU. This indicates the opportunity such cooperative projects creates for the elaboration of an effective structural foreign policy of the EU. It also makes a convincing argument for the EU to promote regional cooperation initiatives within its ENP.

9. Cooperation at the international level

A third level on which interaction between civil society organisations could emerge in the South Caucasus is the international level. At this level we focus on the possible emergence of transnational advocacy networks. Keck and Sikkink

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33 Ibid., 16.

34 Berrin Basak Vener, "The Kura-Araks Basin: Obstacles and Common Objectives for an Integrated Water Resources Management Model among Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia" (MA Professional Project Report, University of New Mexico, 2006), 50-51. Available at http://water.oregonstate.edu/projects/Vener_2006.pdf.

define these as 'networks of activists that try to influence policy, distinguishable largely by the centrality of principled ideas or values in motivating their formation'.[35] International democracy promotion and assistance has been a core task of many international NGOs, think tanks and foundations. As these issues are also at the core of the ENP, there exists a common ground for interaction between them, local civil society and EU institutions. Local civil society organisations can be the 'eyes and ears' of these international civil society organisations providing them with invaluable information from within the countries concerned. These international civil society organisations can funnel the information and demands from local organisations on the international level, in this case EU institutions. This enables civil society from the South Caucasus to be heard at the EU level and provides them with an additional way of pressuring their own national governments. Many of the values and ideas that form these transnational advocacy networks are compatible with the 'common values and commitments' that form the basis of the ENP. As these networks have compatible goals, the EU has an interest in supporting the emergence of these kinds of networks. Moreover, empowering civil society is an ENP goal in itself.

When we look at the current state of affairs, we see that this sort of dynamic is indeed developing in practice in the South Caucasian republics. Both in Azerbaijan and in Georgia consortia emerged that bring together local and international civil society organisations to observe the implementation of the ENP. These consortia published a number of reports and recommendations during the different stages of drafting, signing and implementing the Action Plan.[36] In Georgia some 70 civil society organisations produced a list of recommendations for the Georgian government in 2005 with support from Open Society, Heinrich Böll Stiftung and the Eurasia Foundation. Although this list did not directly materialise into formal involvement of civil society in the ENP Action Plan policy drafting, it did raise the interest and responsibility in the subject. A similar initiative has been developed in Azerbaijan, where, under the auspices of Open

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35 Keck and Sikkink, Activists Beyond Borders, 1.

36 Open Society Georgia Foundation/For Transparency of Public Finances, Georgia and the European Neighbourhood Policy. Perspectives and Challenges, Tbilisi, 2007. Available at http://osgf.ge/data/file_db/Biblioteka/ENP%20_policy%20paper_Eng_5G5ejWrmHc.pdf.

Society, a National Committee for European Integration has been set up. The Committee brings together 54 organisations, scholars, business representatives and journalists and aims to raise awareness through campaigning, policy papers and civic participation.[37] In both examples, international organisations contribute through financing and sharing their knowledge and experience and bring into play their international linkages to their offices in Brussels and other ENP.

These kinds of initiatives should be strongly encouraged by the EU. On the long term, indeed, these advocacy networks could prove an invaluable actor in the move towards a larger inclusion of civil society into the ENP and within the bilateral relations between the EU and the national governments of the ENP-countries.

10. Limits

The limits of this approach need to be acknowledged; integrating civil society into the wider ENP framework will not cure the policy of all its weaknesses. In this article though, we stress the importance of enhancing the civil society component in the wider framework of the ENP as a structural foreign policy. The potential for civil society can only come to fruition when the strengthening of civil society is part of a larger process of democracy promotion or assistance. Next to strengthening the civil society, other vital aspects of a working democracy, such as a free and fair market and a working state apparatus, need to be ensured[38]. However, these targets are already more prevalent on the ENP agenda; a stronger stress on civil society inclusion would lead to a more balanced overall framework.

The emphasis on the role of civil society in the region does not entail an overoptimistic view on the sector. In order to become effective, this approach needs to be based on a realistic assessment of civil society in the South Caucasus, which implies also taking into account its weaknesses. Civil society in the region

37 Azerbaijan National Committee for European Integration, "About Committee," http://www.aamik.az/ts_general/eng/about/komite_haqqinda.htm [accessed 13 July 2008].

38 Philippe C. Schmitter and Imco Brouwer, "Conceptualizing, researching and evaluating democracy promotion and protection". EUI Working Paper SPS no. 99/9. Florence: European University Insitute.

is characterized by the typical weaknesses of post communist civil society, supplemented by a polity in which room for voices deviating from the patriotic official line seems to be limited[39]. This does not mean that civil society organisations have no role to play in the ENP. The multi level approach suggested in this paper offers the possibility of tackling these weaknesses through the contacts on the international level. International NGOs can promote the best practices and forge links with local organisations.

A final caveat is the level of assertiveness the EU has to adopt towards civil society. The inclusion of civil society in the ENP may not lead to a usurpation of the sector by the EU. The credibility and effectiveness of civil society lies in its independence from both government and market. A too-strong entanglement of NGOs and political programmes or financers has led to what Carothers calls the "backlash against democracy promotion"[40]. Stimulating civil society cooperation then does not mean that the EU should become a patron or Maecenas of NGO's in the region, but an equal partner that values input from civil society in the framework of the ENP.

11. Conclusion

In this article we identified the ENP in the South Caucasus as a structural foreign policy in its goals. We substantiate this reasoning by pointing to the stated goals of the ENP, which aims to influence political, legal, socio-economic, security and mental structures in the countries of the South Caucasus, in order to create 'a ring of countries, sharing the EU's fundamental values and objectives, drawn into an increasingly close relationship'[41]. We consider this policy programme as complementary to, but distinct from the EU's conventional foreign policy towards the region, such as the diplomatic efforts by the French presidency during the August war in Georgia. In order to fulfil its structural foreign policy goals, the ENP will have to play a role in enhancing

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39n Marc M. Howard,.: "The weakness of post communist civil society" *Journal of Democracy*, 13, No. 1 (2002): 157.

40 Thomas Carothers: "The backlash against democracy promotion", Foreign Affairs, vol. 85, No. 2 (2006):55.

41 European Commission, ENP. Strategy Paper, 5.

regional cooperation and mutual understanding. Bearing in mind the heavily fragmented nature of civil society and the prevailing enemy images about other societal entities, a first step towards improved regional relations is to change the existing mental structures. We argue that by stimulating civil society to cooperate across the existing divides, it can play a key role in influencing ideas about cooperation on different levels (individual, societal, state, intersocietal, interstate and regional) in the Caucasian societies.

In an effort to demonstrate the mechanisms of how civil society can take up this role, we distinguish three levels on which cooperation can be established. We argue the EU must encourage cooperation at all three levels by financing and coordinating (in cooperation with other international actors) specific projects. This would not only benefit the region's civil society (which is one of the ENP-goals in itself), but would also be a step towards increasing the effectiveness of the ENP as a structural foreign policy.

At the substate level (1), which we situate within the borders of an internationally recognized state, but across the de facto borders of this state and its break-away regions, civil society can play a front-runner role with small-scale cooperation initiatives that change mental structures about cooperation. At the transstate level (2), which we consider as the level where participants from the whole region come together, we point to the possibility of including low level government officials into the cooperation initiatives. This way, the front-runner role of civil society can potentially be complemented with an upwards diffusion effect into higher levels of government. At the international level (3), we point to the potential which is created by the emergence of transnational advocacy networks. By cooperating around issues involving the ENP, local, regional and international civil society organisations can pool their resources and use their increased weight to influence the relations between the EU and the respective state governments. This way they can play a role in pushing the EU towards a greater inclusion of civil society into the ENP, hereby also empowering some of the stated 'common values and commitments', such as democracy, good governance, human rights and the development of civil society.

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THE ROLE OF EXTERNAL ACTORS IN CIVIL SOCIETY BUILDING: THE CASE OF THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA

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Abstract

This paper examines the impact of external actors upon the development of civil society in Macedonia since 1990. The study analyzes the development of civil society as an integral element of democratization and argues that although external actors have facilitated the development of civil society in the case of Macedonia, their success has been conditioned upon contextual knowledge and local support. The analysis is structured around the impact of the external actors on the following elements: the financing of civil society organizations (CSOs), their origin and manner of establishment, the agenda setting process, the level of public trust CSOs enjoy, and their division upon ethnic lines. The study employs qualitative methodology and relies on empirical data from open-ended interviews with civil society activists, international organizations and intellectuals. This research primarily contributes to the contextual literature on development of civil society in Macedonia and provides useful findings for comparison with other transitional countries, especially multi-ethnic countries with deep ethnic cleavages.

1. Introduction

In the beginning of the 1990s, civil society building was considered part of a successful blueprint for democratization; nevertheless, the advancement of transition has shown that the establishment of effective civil society in the conditions of post-communism is a complex process of societal transformation.[42]

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42 See Ian Jeffries and Robert Bideleux, "Nationalism and the post-1989 transition to democracy and the market in the Balkans," in Problems of Economic and Political Transformation in the Balkans, ed. Ian Jeffries (London: Pinter Publishers, 1996); Andrew Janos, East Central Europe in the Modern World (US: Stanford

The key factor behind these developments is the progress of transition, which pointed out that there is no predetermined modus operandi for democratization, questioning previously established models. It has become clear that civil society as an element of democratization is a context specific process, which necessitates the examination of individual countries separately in relation to the factors which influence civil society building.[43] In the conditions of non-existent civil society in the beginning of the 1990s, external actors such as international organizations and foundations have exerted formative influence upon the rise of civil society organizations (hereinafter CSOs) in post-communist countries.

In relation, this research examines the impact of external actors such as the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the European Union (EU), the United Nations (UN) and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) on the development of civil society in Macedonia since independence. The study analyzes the development of civil society as an integral element of democratization. Since the 1990s, predominantly through the involvement of foreign donors and organizations, the Macedonian civil society has been marked by the creation of a dense network of civil society organizations (CSOs). The focus of this study is the impact of the external actors on the defining features of the Macedonian civil society sector: the financing of CSOs, their origin and manner of establishment, the manner in which CSOs set their agenda, the level of public trust they enjoy, and their division upon ethnic lines. The study employs qualitative methodology and relies on empirical data from open-ended interviews. On the basis of its findings, the study argues that external actors have facilitated the development of civil society in the case of Macedonia, but their success has been conditioned upon contextual knowledge and local support.

University Press, 2000); Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan, Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation, (Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996)

43 See Thomas Carothers "The End of the Transition Paradigm" in *Journal of Democracy*. Vol.13. No.1. 2002. 5-2; John D. Nagle and Alison Mahr, Democracy and Democratization (London: Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1999); Geoffrey Pridham, "Democratic Transitions in Theory and Practice" in Democratization in Eastern Europe-domestic and international perspectives, ed. Pridham Geoffrey and Tatu Vanhanen (US: Routledge Publishers, 1994)

2. Civil society, democratization and democratic consolidation

Despite the extensive research on the transition process in Latin America, Southeastern Europe and the USSR, a general compromise on the meaning of the term *civil society* is still lacking.[44] In post-communism, it has been associated with two definitions. The first one identifies civil society with the economic revolution and liberalization i.e. *Bürgerlichegesselschaft*.[45] The second term is completely divorced from the market economy and is largely identified with the so-called third sector—CSOs.[46] The latter view of civil society distinct from both the state and the market is used in this study. In relation to specific terminology, the research closely relates to Ernest Gellner's understanding of civil society, according to whom civil society denotes "a set of diverse non-governmental institutions strong enough to counterbalance the state and, while not preventing the state from fulfilling its role of keeper of the peace and arbitrator between major interests, can nevertheless prevent it from dominating and atomizing the rest of society."[47] Thus, the main feature of civil society is its independence from the government, "wherever the distinction between civil society and government is marked, however, there must always exist a boundary between them, because each is defined in opposition to the other."[48]

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44 For different definitions of the term civil society see Schmidt, "Civil Society and Social Things: Setting the Boundaries of the Social Sciences," *Social Research,* Winter95, Vol. 62, Issue 4. See also, Sunil Khilhani, "The development of Civil Society" in Sidupta Kaviraj and Sunil Khilhani, ed. *Civil Society-History and Possibilities*, (UK: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

45 We are aware of the lack of theoretical consensus as whether the economic sphere is in general a part of civil society. As we adopt the latter view of CSOs, the distinction made is the following: "Civil society is distinguished from the government because it is voluntary, and from the private activities of markets because it seeks common good [rather than business profit]." Taken from the dictionary of civic practices available at: Civil Society: Civic Practices Network: Dictionary: <http://www.cpn.org/tools/dictionary/index.html> (April 16,2004).

46 Sorin Antohi and Vladimir Tismaneanu eds. *Between past and future-the revolutions of 1989 and their aftermath*, (Budapest: CEU Press 2000), 18.

47 Ernest Gellner "The importance of being modular" in *Civil Society-theory, history and comparison*, ed. John Hall, (UK: Polity Press, 1995): 32. For further discussion on civil society definitions see Adam Seligman, The Idea of Civil Society, (USA: Macmillan, 1992); Kaviraj and Khilhani, Civil Society-History and Possibilities.

48 Robert C. Post and Nancy L. Rosenblum, "Introduction" in Nancy L. Rosenblum and Robert C. Post ed. *Civil Society and Government*, (US: Princeton University Press, 2002).: 11

Though abandoned through most of the twentieth century, the concept of civil society was rediscovered by the dissident writers in Central and Eastern Europe in the 1980s. Writers such as Havel and Michnik revived the concept by arguing that civil society is built in opposition to the government and depends on mutually reinforcing patterns of responsibility and interconnectedness.[49] In the dissident writings, civil society acquired not only the status of a panacea for crushing down the communist system and ideology, but also for the democratic problems of the post-communist countries. As a result, civil society has been a dominant concept in all post 1989 literature related to Eastern Europe, which considers it an essential element of democratization.[50] For Havel, civil society stands at the core of democratization, since without civic engagement there is no basis for a consolidated democratic order.[51]

Democratization as a term describes the overall process of regime change from the end of the previous authoritarian regime to the stabilization and rooting of new democracies.[52] Though democratization is a comparatively new field of research in the academic world, the three waves of democratization in the second half of the twentieth century initiated a prolific debate signified by the appearance of different theories for explanation of this process. All academic approaches tend to divide the process of democratization into several phases. Though often subject to disagreement, the most common temporal division with respect to post-communist countries is between the processes of

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49 Vaclav Havel, "The Power of the Powerless" in *The Power of the Powerless*, (New York: Palach Press 1985); For a discussion see N.J Rengger. "Towards a culture of democracy?" in Building democracy? The international dimension of Democratization in Eastern Europe, ed. Geoffrey Pridham, Eric Herring and George Sanford (New York: St.Martin's Press, 1994), 66.

50 Literature on CEE has placed the development of a functioning civil society at the heart of the transformation of SEE after communism. See Havel, The Power of the Powerless; Janos, East Central Europe in the modern world; Linz and Stepan, Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation; Bideleux and Jeffries, Problems of Economic and Political Transformation in the Balkans; Pridham and Vanhanen ed., Democratization in Eastern Europe-domestic and international perspectives.

51 Havel quoted in Jon Elster, Claus Offe and Ulrich Preuss. *Institutional Design in Post-Communist Societies: Rebuilding the Ship at the Sea*, (UK: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 281.

52 Geoffrey Pridham and Paul Lewis "Introduction" in Pridham and Lewis eds. *Stabilising fragile democracies: Comparing New Party Systems in Southern and Eastern Europe*, (London: Routledge, 1996), 2.

transition to a liberal democracy and its subsequent consolidation.[53]

In many cases, the term democratic consolidation is used in several incompatible senses in the scholarly literature, reflecting diverse understandings of the nature of democracy itself.[54] Despite the specific definitional differences, the concept of democratic consolidation almost unavoidably entails a multitude of conditions, which Linz and Stepan in their commonly accepted analytical framework summarize in the following criteria: a free and lively civil society, a relatively autonomous political society, rule of law, a usable state bureaucracy and an institutionalized economic society.[55] Different definitions of consolidation emphasize "various processes, levels, dimensions, locations of areas of political change."[56] One of the core division lines in this area has been between the emphasis on *formal criteria* and a *substantive conception* of democracy. As defined by Kaldor and Vejvoda the formal aspect of democracy embodies "a set of rules, procedures and institutions [...] which represent an a priori safeguard against the abuses of power. Substantive democracy embodies the formal mechanisms is a "way of regulating power relations in such a way as to maximize the opportunities for individuals influence the [...] key decisions in society."[57] This study adopts a substantive view on democratic consolidation, which entails both the duration of a democratic regime with significant changes in the quality of its performance.[58]

The substantive element of civil society requires the establishment of mechanisms by which the exercise of state power is open to universal contestation and becomes dependent

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53 Pridham and Lewis, "Introduction" in Pridham and Lewis eds., op. cit., p.2.: For a discussion of approaches towards democratization in the postcommunist world see Petr Kopecký, Cas Mudde, "What has Eastern Europe taught us about the democratization literature (and vice versa)" *European Journal of Political Research*, (Vol. 37, 2000)

54 See Stephen E. Hanson "Defining Democratic Consolidation" in Richard D. Anderson Jr. et al, *Postcommunism and the Theory of Democracy*, (Princeton University Press, 2001).

55 Linz and Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation*, op. cit., 7.

56 See Fritz Plasser Peter A. Ulram and Harald Waldrauch, *Democratic Consolidation in East-Central Europe*, (London: Macmillan Press, 1998), 11.

57 Vejvoda and Kaldor, op. cit., 62.

58 Don Chull Shin, "On the Third Wave of Democratization: A Synthesis and Evaluation of Recent Theory and Research", *World Politics*, Vol.47, No.1, (Oct 1994), 144.

upon societal forces within civil society.[59] The substantive aspects of democracy essentially rest upon use of the newly acquired right to participate in the policy making processes. However, "the disillusionment with democracy as it is perceived, exhaustion after the frenetic activity of the years 1989-91 and the tradition of apathy [...] resulted in low public activism in the civil sector. The absence of a public sphere, a space for true discussion in a sharply polarized situation, leads often to political cynicism and apathy."[60] Hence, the progress in democratization in the post-communist world, in many aspects has been purely formal and not accompanied by substantive developments. This problem is a result of both the idiosyncrasies of the post-communist space and the short period of transformation of these societies.

The nature of the emerging civil society is specific to each country and "depends largely on historical precedent, political culture (especially the propensity of society to organize and the relationship of social classes), particular forms of nationalism, and the social context of institutional development."[61] Thus, an additional factor that requires examination in the Macedonian context is the effect of the diverse ethnic structure on civil society building. Literature on transition considers ethnic homogeneity as one of the decisive factors in the differences between democratization in Central and Eastern Europe. The ethnic element is a crucial factor when dealing with civil society in the Macedonian context, affecting the civil society building in two ways. On the one hand, the existing ethnic division of the population is reflected in the civil society sector. This division, subsequently, hinders the legitimacy of the claim of civil society organizations of representing the overall non-political sphere of society. This study examines the impact of the external actors upon civil society building, in correlation with the theoretical concept of civil society.

The conceptual background of civil society as an element of democratization in combination with the impact of ethnic diversity

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59 Michael Bernhard, "Civil Society and Democratic Transition in East Central Europe", *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 108, No. 2 (Summer, 1993): 326

60 Vejvoda and Kaldor, op. cit., 71.

61 Marcia Weigle and Jim Butterfield, "Civil Society in Reforming Communist Regimes: The Logic of Emergence," *Comparative Politics*, Vol.25, No1 (Oct.,1992), 2.

upon its development provides the framework in which this study operates. In order to set the basis for examination of the influence of external actors upon the development of civil society as an element of democratic consolidation, in the following chapter the study provides an assessment of the context of civil society development in the case of Macedonia.

3. Context

In order to assess civil society building in post-communist Macedonia, an overview of the forms of civic association during communism and the inherited relationships between the state and these organizations is necessary, due to its impact on the transitional period. As part of the Yugoslav Federation (1945-1990), Macedonia supported various kinds of citizens' associations (i.e. cultural, voluntary, sport, etc.) along the lines of the dominant communist ideology. The monopolistic position of the state party in the economy affected citizens' associations: the state distributed financial resources in accordance with *"legitimate"* interests and needs to ideologically reliable associations and organizations.[62] As a result, the term civil society, as used in this study, is not representative for the organizations existent prior to 1990.[63] In contextual literature, these forms of organizing have been commonly referred to as social organizations, whose actual role was quasi-nongovernmental, since they promoted the state policy defined by the League of Communists.[64] Not surprisingly, the few state controlled citizens' organizations had large membership—such as the Union of Women, Union of Pensioners etc. The main aim of these organizations was primarily to promote and support the ruling party and ideology.[65] In the half century between 1940 and

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62 "Civil society in transition" – National human development report. United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Available at: : <http://www.undp.org.mk/nhdr/NHDR.PDF> (April 10th, 2004)

63 Di Palma has argued that during communism civil society of sorts have survived in Eastern Europe, nevertheless, as the chapter analyzes the state-civil society relations, this is not subject to examination. For more on this see Guiseppe Di Palma, "Legitimation from the Top to Civil Society: Politico-Cultural Change in Eastern Europe", *World Politics*, Vol.44, No1, (Oct., 1991):49.

64 "Civil society in transition" – National human development report. See also see Gjorgje Ivanov and Dane Taleski, "Civil Society in South East Europe: The case of Macedonia", Institute for Democracy, Solidarity, and Civil Society, (September 2003).

65 Ivanov and Taleski, "Civil Society in South East Europe: The case of Macedonia".

1989, over two hundred such organizations were formed, a rate of less than five per year.[66] Fully dependent upon the state for financial support, they were subserviently positioned in relation to the state officials.

A closely related factor with the legacy of communism, which has affected civil society building in transitional Macedonia, was the elitist nature of the regime change in the 1990s. As the regime change occurred exclusively at the level of political elites, without major societal involvement, there was no pressure on the political elites for a swift institutional transformation. Analysts have concluded that no more than one percent of the Macedonian population was involved in the historical events in the beginning of the 1990s.[67] Correspondingly, Macedonia did not have its own 'school' of philosophy, nor did it have any genuine dissidents who could dispute the legitimacy of the political order.[68] Hence, when SFRY disintegrated, Macedonia had no strong social structures independent of the state – structures which are prerequisites for the creation and maintenance of stable, democratic, political institutions.[69] In post-communist countries, [such as Macedonia], which lack any historical practice and tradition of democracy, civic engagement in the public sphere is critical for the building of effective civil society.[70] However, instead of creating a culture of participation, there is a tendency of "disbelief in the efficacy of participating in public affairs."[71]

In addition to the specific legacy of communism and its' overturn, in the case of Macedonia, civil society building was further burdened with the dissolution of the Yugoslav federation.[72]

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66 Data base of the Macedonian Centre for International Cooperation, Available online at www.mcms.org.mk. Since MCIC data was put together in the late 1990s , it is probable that more organizations could have been created during the period. However, these would not have been sufficient in number to affect the overall number.

67 Slavko Milosavlevski, Istocna Evropa megu Egalitarizmot i Demokratijata, (Skopje: Ljuboten, 1993), 144

68 Gjorgji Ivanov, "The Power of the Powerless: Democracy and Civil Society in Macedonia" in Margaret Blunden and Patrick Burke ed. Democratic Reconstruction in the Balkans, Centre for the Study of Democracy, 2001.

69 Ivanov, op. cit.

70 Daniel N. Nelson, "Civil Society Endangered," *Social Research*, 0037783X, Summer96, Vol. 63, Issue 2.

71 Nelson, "Civil Society Endangered."

72 Ivan Krastev, "The Inflexibility Trap-Frustrated Societies, Weak States and Democracy," Available at <www.ned.org/reports/balkansFeb2002.html>

Moreover, parallel with the economic, political, and social transition, Macedonia has been undergoing processes of state and nation building.[73] Though this study does not deal with these two major processes, a specific reference is necessary, as this complex situation has made the development of civil society marginal in comparison to state and nationhood.[74] Since in 1991 Macedonia gained independence for the first time in its history, it is not surprising that Macedonian political discourse centered on the creation of a state and a nation (contested in various manners from the neighboring countries).[75] After independence, feelings of insecurity regarding national identity and state building were reinforced. Area studies on Macedonia generally point that since independence Macedonia has not consolidated democracy (read civil society) due to the unresolved stateness issue.[76] Moreover, Hall argues that societies undergoing nation-building processes find themselves with politics of such novelty as almost to rule out the possibility of civil society.[77] Thus, during Macedonia's transition, the building of civil society in Macedonia was secondary to the state and nation building processes.

Nation building aspirations, resulting from Macedonia's first historic encounter with independence accompany the state building process and further complicate the building of indigenous civil society. Thus, the legacy and presence of strong ethnic [...] hostilities, renders it particularly difficult to agree on rules that become [...] effectively binding to all, or to institute well protected and demarcated spheres of autonomous action within civil

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73 For more on state building in Macedonia see Zhidas Daskalovski,"Democratic Consolidation and the Stateness Problem: The Case of Macedonia," *The Global Review of Ethnopolitics*, Vol. 3, no. 2, (January 2004); For nation building see also Zhidas Daskalovski, "Language and Identity: The Ohrid Framework Agreement and Liberal Notions of Citizenship and Nationality in Macedonia," Journal of Ehnopolitics and Minority Issues in Europe, Vol.1, (2002). Available at: <http://www.ecmi.de/jemie/download/Focus1-2002Daskalovski.pdf>

74 For more on state and nation building and democratization see Karen Dawisha, "Research concepts and Methodologies" in Politics, Power, and the Struggle for Democracy in Southeast Europe, ed. Karen Dawisha and Bruce Parrot (UK: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Dawisha and Parrot, ed. *Politics, Power, and the Struggle for Democracy in Southeast Europe*,

75 For a discussion see Andrew Rossos, 'The Macedonian Question and Instability in the Balkans,' in Norman N. Naimark and Holly Case, ed. Yugoslavia and Its Historians, (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2002). Also Loring M. Danforth, *The Macedonian conflict*, (Princeton University Press, 1995).

76 Daskalovski, "Democratic Consolidation and the 'Stateness' Problem: The Case of Macedonia."

77 Hall. John A. "In Search of Civil Society" in Civil Society-theory, history and comparison,22.

society.[78] Each ethnic community developed their own metanaratives which are not only different but divergent and reflected in all spheres of social organization.

These developments have been in line with Linz and Stepan's conclusion that "the more the population of a state is composed of plurinational, lingual, religious, or cultural societies, [...] an agreement on the fundamentals of democracy will be more difficult."[79] An illustration of this is the signing of the Ohrid Framework Agreement (OFA) in which the civil society concept of the state was further abolished at the expense of the ethnic concept of the state. This tendency was even more firmly indented with the Constitutional amendments stemming from the OFA and is presently to be identified in the activities for its implementation. While a general consensus exists on the necessity of the Agreement as a conflict prevention mechanism and a solid foundation for advancing democratization in Macedonia, recognition of its weaknesses in further institutionalizing differences also exists.[80]

The Macedonian context during transition has affected civil society building in several interconnected ways: firstly, civil society building was inferior to the processes of nation and state building. This, in turn, strengthened the ethnic division of the society resulting in the creation of CSOs predominantly on ethnic lines. Lastly, the elitist regime change inhibited the development of independent social structures. Thus, contextual factors, both the legacy of communism and the specifics of the transitional Macedonian context largely constrain the civil society development in the country.

4. External actors and CSOs in the Republic of Macedonia

As explained in the previous chapter, the contextual specificities have largely complicated civil society building in the case of

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78 Elster, Offe and Preuss. *Institutional Design in Post-Communist Societies: Rebuilding the Ship at the Sea*, 246.

79 Linz and Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation*, op. cit., 29

80 Ljubomir Frckovski, Snezana Klincharova, Kim Mehmeti, Ferid Muhic, Robert Alagjozovski, Zhidas Daskalovski, Gjuner Ismail, Interview with the authors, Spring, 2004 in Macedonia; See also Biljana Vankovska, "Current Perspectives on Macedonia," Heinrich Boll Foundation, (2002): 8-12.

Macedonia. Due to the various levels on which external actors have influenced the development of civil society, this study employs qualitative methodology. In order to obtain empirical data, the authors have conducted twenty semi-structured interviews in the period April 2004-September 2007. Open-ended interviews "provide access to the context of people's behavior and thereby provide a way for researchers to understand the meaning of that behavior."[81] The interview guide for the study was structured around the external involvement in civil society building with respect to the establishment of CSOs in Macedonia, their financing and transparency, public trust in CSOs and the impact of the diverse ethnic composition of Macedonia on civil society building. The interview guide draws particular attention to contextual issues, "placing an interviewee's attitudes and behavior in the context of their individual biography and the wider social setting."[82]

The interviewed sample consists of civil society activists, international organizations staff and intellectuals, maintaining ethnic representation. The structure of the sample is justified by the need for representativity. Each of the interviewed groups provides a different perspective on the issue increasing the possibility for generalization. In addition to civil society activists, the choice of intellectuals as interviewee group is justified by the role they play in transitional societies. While intellectuals think in terms of civil society, most other people adopt the national frame of reference.[83] The sampling process is a combination of intentional choice and snowballing technique. The intentionally chosen interviewees are active in the dominant CSOs and they have been selected according to their membership, contacts with external actors and previous work.[84] Considering the informal nature of the civil society sector, the combination of purposive and snowballing sampling is the most appropriate and allows for the identification of the most relevant CSOs.

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81 Irving Seidman quoted in "Interviews and the Philosophy of Qualitative Research," *Journal of Higher Education,* (Jan/Feb2004), Vol. 75, Issue1.

82 Fiona Devine "Qualitative Methods" in *Theory and Methods in Political Science*, ed. David Marsh and Gerry Stoker (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 199.

83 Karol Jakubowicz "Civil Society and Public sphere in Central and Eastern Europe–A Polish Case study," Available at the Nordic Information Centre for Media and Communication Research:

<http://www.nordicom.gu.se/reviewcontents/ncomreview/ncomreview296/JAKUBO.PDF > (April 20th, 2004).

84 For a full list of CSOs in Macedonia see <www.mango.org.mk>.

It is of increasing importance to note that all interviewees highlighted that external actors influenced civil society development on various levels from the beginning of transition. Most of them also assessed positively the involvement of external actors in civil society in Macedonia. Hence, in general, CSOs in the Republic of Macedonia perceive external actors as major supporters of their work.[85] The most obvious and direct manner in which external actors influenced the development of civil society was the provision of direct financial assistance. Our interviewees in general highlighted the influence of external actors with respect to the following features of the civil society sector: financing of the CSOs, the manner of establishment and origin of CSOs in the country, the agenda setting of CSOs, the public trust and the division of CSOs on ethnic lines. Each of these elements is examined separately in the following five sections.

4.1 Financial support

The first and primary aspect in which external actors influenced civil society development was with the provision of financial assistance both for specific activities as well as organizational capacity building.[86] As Sampson highlights, whereas the original aim of western aid development programs in post-communist countries was on economic reconstruction, their focus was gradually transferred to the establishment of a healthy civil society as part of democratization. One of the main instruments for supporting civil society was to finance projects enabling CSOs to imitate western CSOs.[87] Despite existent criticisms to the financial strategy approach, nevertheless, financial assistance was much needed, since in the case of Macedonia, the domestic possibilities for financing of CSOs are minimal. The share of the state in financing the activities of the civil organizations is also minimal.[88] The most important sources of income are membership fees, gifts, and donations; totaling to forty-two

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85 All of the interviewees highlighted this.

86 Silva Pesic, Interview with the authors, (September 2007).

87 Steven Sampson, "The Social Life of Projects-Importing Civil Society to Albania" in *Civil Society: Challenging Western Models*,   ed. Chris Hann and Elizabeth Dunn (London: Routledge, 1996);

88 Daniela Dimitroska-interview with the authors. See also "Civil society in transition" – National human development polent report, UNDP. Ivanov, Taleski, "Civil Society in South East Europe: The case of Macedonia."

percent of the incomes of civic associations.[89] The donations by the economic enterprises are not liable to taxation revenues and the most frequently used argument in favor of such policy is the fear of money laundering.[90] The data of this study and other studies on the financing of civil society highlights the pressing need of tax exemptions to increase incomes that originate from private donations in order to decrease the civil society dependence upon foreign funds.[91] Despite the continuous emphasis of this problem, so far, there have been no major developments in this regard. Similarly, the 2007 Freedom house *Nations in Transit* report on Macedonia concludes that "few civil society groups are financially viable in the long term. Although a new law was enacted in April 2006 providing tax incentives for local or foreign donors, local philanthropy and volunteerism are almost nonexistent, while the participation of religious groups in charitable activities is minimal".[92]

In this setting, external involvement, especially in terms of financial support, has been crucial for the development of civil society. The strategy for financial assistance for democratization, however, did not always take into consideration the distinct features of the Macedonian civil society. The exclusive focus on financial involvement has up to a large extent resulted in a donor-driven civil society sector in the case of Macedonia. This has been, to a large extent, a result of the fact that domestic resources are very limited, thus the CSOs position themselves on what donors offer in their programmes.[93] It has been also commonly accepted that the strategy of financial assistance from

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89 "Civil society in transition" – National human development report. See also Ivanov and Taleski, "Civil Society in South East Europe: The case of Macedonia".

90 "Civil society in transition" – National human development report. See also Zaneta Trajkovska,."Green Ants, NGO and Media in Macedonia,"Graganski Svet, No.13, February 2002. (Authors' translation) Available at: <http://www.graganskisvet.org.mk/default-mk.asp?ItemID=E5D10A239B152E498A5D95E6C38B9EB3> (March 21st, 2004).

91 Guner Ismail, Interviews with the authors. April 2004. For dependence of the NGO sector on foreign funds see also: Ivanov, Taleski, "Civil Society in South East Europe: The case of Macedonia"; For general analysis of Southeastern Europe see also Parrot, Bruce. "Perspectives on post-communist democratizations" in Dawisha and Parrot, ed. *Politics, Power, and the Struggle for Democracy in Southeast Europe*, 25.

92 Freedom House Nations in Transit Report on Macedonia, 2007 available at: <http://www.freedomhouse.hu//images/fdh_galleries/NIT2007final/nit-macedonia-web.pdf>

93 Zoran Stojkovski, Interview with the authors, April 2004

abroad coupled with the lack of domestic funding has created a largely donor-oriented society in the country.[94]

On the other hand, we have not been witnessing any concerted efforts on the side of the external actors to influence the Government to increase support of the CSOs.[95] There has been no pressure from external actors to the Government for concerted action on improving domestic possibilities for financing of CSOs. Moreover, on the NGO sustainability index for 2006 the financial viability of the CSOs has the lowest grades from all other aspects with the study concluding that the NGOs continue to depend primarily upon grants from the international donor community.[96] CSOs, on the other hand, expect to see increasing pressure from abroad to the Government, especially in light of the decreasing external financial assistance.[97] Hence, the need of coupling domestic and external efforts for re-modeling the possibilities for CSO financing becomes increasingly evident.

4.2 Establishment and origin of CSOs

In addition to their primary role in terms of financing CSOs, external actors have also influenced the establishment and origin of CSOs. The 1998 data of the Ministry of Interior indicates that there were six thousand and five hundred registered CSOs in Macedonia.[98] A more recent publication from a domestic foundation "The Macedonian Center for International Cooperation" claims that in 2003 there were around 5769 CSOs.[99] The majority of the public in Macedonia believes that there are too many CSOs in the country, although seen in comparative terms there is no excessive number of CSOs per capita.[100] External actors have affected the rise in the number of CSOs from several aspects. On the one hand, the presence of external actors and predominantly their financial resources have undoubtedly influenced the rise in

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94 Silva Pesic, Interview with the authors, September 2007

95 Sasho Klekovski, Interview with the authors, September 2007

96 NGO sustainability index for Macedonia, 2006, available at:

<http://www.usaid.gov/locations/europe_eurasia/dem_gov/ngoindex/2006/macedonia.pdf>

97 Sasho Klekovski, Interview with the authors, September 2007

98 "Civil society in transition" – National human development report.

99 Detailed information available at <www.civicworld.org.mk>

100 Mirjana Najcevska, Sasho Klekovski, Interview with the authors, September 2007.

the number of CSOs. In numerous instances in Macedonia, CSOs were developed to target a specific foundation or source of finances.[101] Such has been the case with organizations working in the field of ethnic reconciliation, most of which did not have real roots in the civil society. [102] These organizations, as practice indicates, have not been sustainable and most of them are no longer active. In this manner, a significant number of underdeveloped CSOs were established, and as explained in the previous section, most of them are fully dependent on foreign assistance.[103]

Similarly as with the number of CSOs and their establishment, external actors have also influenced the origin of CSOs in the Republic of Macedonia. Unlike in the other countries of post-communist Europe where civil society has been commonly rooted in the anti-communist movements, in Macedonia the first CSOs were established and facilitated largely by left oriented political elites.[104] External actors have also influenced this development. A common example of this trend is that in the beginning of the 1990s the entire management structure of one of the major international Foundations in Macedonia consisted of members of the left-oriented ruling party at the time.[105] Having developed under the influence of the left-oriented political elites, it is not surprising that following the change in Government, the increasingly politicized state institutions at times were distrustful of the civil society sector. The 1999 UNDP National Report on Civil Society emphasizes that the state looks with suspicion on the civil sector activities.[106] In 1998, civil organizations were publicly portrayed as "traitors" and "foreign spies" by high-ranking political officials in power.[107] Though this animosity has decreased significantly over time, one can conclude that external actors had

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101 Jasminka Friscik, Interview with the authors, April 2004.

102 Sasho Klekovski, Interview with the authors, September 2007.

103 Jasminka Friscik, Interview with the authors, April 2004.

104 See "15 years of transition – a country moving towards citizen participation" Civicus civil society index, Macedonian Center for international cooperation, Skopje 2006. Available at: <www.mcms.org.mk> (May 18, 2007)

105 Sasho Klekovski, Interview with the authors, September 2007.

106 "Civil society in transition" – National human development report.

107 Ivanov and Taleski, "Civil Society in South East Europe: The case of Macedonia",

formative influence over the origin and further direction of development of the Macedonian civil society.

4.3 Agenda setting

The aforementioned influence of external actors on the formative features of CSOs in Macedonia undoubtedly shaped the manner in which CSOs set their agenda. As the 2007 Freedom House Nations in Transit Report on Macedonia notes "various international donors supported the NGO sector, each with its own agenda often not coordinated with local needs and NGO demands. The donors have taken a top-down approach, offering funding to local organizations only if their programs and projects match the priorities established by the funders in Washington or Brussels, for example".[108] This practice has led to a rather unusual process of agenda setting among CSOs. Instead of having an agenda modeled according to domestic pressure and concerns, priorities were on the basis of external influence and foreign policies of the countries of origin of the international organizations. In many cases, domestic priorities have been rather neglected at the expense of the donor's regional and global priorities.[109] A prominent example of this form has been that CSOs in the Republic of Macedonia have weakly responded to the primary societal concerns – poverty and widespread corruption.[110] Despite these two concerns standing at the top of the list of public concerns in the country, they have been very weakly addressed by CSOs, raising concerns over the manner of agenda setting of the civil society sector in the country. On the other hand, issues which were rather low on the domestic agenda have sometimes appeared to be on the agenda of external actors, thereby creating organizations that respond to the external, rather than domestic needs.[111] Such an example is the legislative amendment for religious organization, which was not an immediate concern of the general public, but an externally induced priority.[112]

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108 Freedom House Nations in Transit Report Macedonia 2006.

109 Silva Pesic, Interview with the authors, September 2007.

110 Sasho Klekovski, Interview with the authors, September 2007.

111 Sasho Klekovski, Interview with the authors, September 2007.

112 Sasho Klekovski, Interview with the authors, September 2007.

External and inadequate agenda setting has been conditioned by the extent in which external actors' use of local experts and staff. In the beginning of transition, most of the external actors lacked contextual knowledge.[113] Most of the international organizations usually grouped Macedonia with the countries of Eastern Europe, despite the evident peculiarities.[114] Nevertheless, this tendency with the advancement of transition has been slowly changing.[115] Today, the least contextual knowledge and most inappropriate agenda setting is to be found among the international organizations which have the highest staff turnover.[116] These organizations, in which the staff rotates on a short period of time, have had the most problems in understanding the domestic peculiarities and in most cases have proven to be the least effective in the setting of priorities.[117]

Quite opposite to the external agenda setting, there have been several best case practices in terms of external actors' influence on civil society building. By using local staff, international organizations can compensate for their lack of contextual knowledge.[118] The combination, namely, of domestic social capital and external technical and financial assistance have had extremely significant impact on the development of civil society.[119] Such an example in the case of Macedonia has been the environmental movement, which was gradually transferred into a politics of the state, with the establishment of the Ministry of Environment.[120] Another example is the establishment of the Unit for Cooperation with the CSOs in the Government and the adoption of the Government Strategy for cooperation with the civil society. These two instruments significantly improve the communication and involvement of CSOs in the democratization processes by institutionalizing the dialogue between the state and civil society. Building partnerships and broad-based coalitions between external actors, the civil sector and the government

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113 Silva Pesic, Interview with the authors, September 2007.

114 Mirjana Najcevska, Interview with the authors, September 2007.

115 Silva Pesic, Interview with the authors, September 2007.

116 Mirjana Najcevska, Interview with the authors, September 2007.

117 Mirjana Najcevska, Interview with the authors, September 2007.

118 Ivica Vasev, Interview with the authors, June 2007.

119 Sasho Klekovski, Interview with the authors, September 2007.

120 Ivica Vasev, Sasho Klekovski Interview with the authors, September 2007.

through joint activities and coordinated policies help to develop pluralism and stimulate democratic initiatives [..].[121] Through this channel CSOs are assessed as having reached the level of lobbyists to the government that affect even legislative changes.[122]

These examples highlight the need for a shift in the priority setting and its modeling according to the domestic needs. They also show that the international involvement is not sufficient to foster civil society building and democratization, indicating the need for domestic support for the effectiveness of external interventions. Hence, when working in partnership with well established domestic structures, international organizations have managed to make a significant impact on civil society building.

4.4 Public trust in CSOs

The rise in the number of CSOs coupled with the dominance of foreign finances has had significant impact on their development and positioning with regard to the public. On one of the last surveys of public opinion, 55.1% of the citizens declared that CSOs serve foreign interests.[123] Although CSOs enjoy a much more positive image today than in the beginning of the 90s, the public still has a predominantly negative perception of the civil sector.[124] As assessed by CSO members and activists, despite the constant quantitative increase of CSOs, the trust of the population in the civil sector seems to be one of the weakest elements of the civil society building in Macedonia.[125] The increase in numbers of CSOs acts as an impediment in public activism as well, because the public in some cases associates the

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121 Nevenka Rosomanova, Interview with the authors, June 2007.

122 Valbona Morina Maksut, Interview with the authors, June 2007.

123 Trust, Responsibility about social issues and charity in Macedonia, (Authors' translation), Macedonian Centre for International Cooperation, 2006. Available at: <www.mcms.org.mk>

124 Daniela Dimitroska, Guner Ismail, Interview with the authors, April 2004.

125 Ilo Trajkovski,"Civil Society in Macedonia: Current State and Perspectives". Graganski Svet, December 2002. Available at: <http://www.graganskisvet.org.mk/default-mk.asp?ItemID=6F624BCB318CC743B22A58 7F76C07A71> (March 21st, 2004) . See also: Vesna Velik-Stefanovska, Interview in Graganski Svet, No.5, June 2001. (Authors' translation) Available at: <http://www.graganskisvet.org.mk/default-mk.asp?ItemID= >(March 21st, 2004) .

appearance of CSOs with the problems of transition.[126] As a result, the number of people willing to join a CSO is noticeably low.[127]

This distrust, on the one hand, is founded in the overall suspicion of public organization inherited from communism, but is also a result of the general lack of understanding of the role of civil society in the country and the blurred role of external actors. An average Macedonian perceives CSOs as a way to travel internationally and as a means oft having more contacts with internationals within the country.[128] The civil society concept is still largely alien to the general population and activism is not common. Limited participation is occurring only in the case of a financially supported and secured project, with rare cases of continuous civil society involvement.[129] Instead, CSOs have been substituting for the weak economic situation in the country and have in many cases provided for employment opportunities rather than organizations for realization of certain goals.[130] This image is supported by the general understanding of civil society activism as an easy and well-paid engagement providing access to foreign funds in the country. As a result, a large segment of the public holds a negative image of CSOs and associates them exclusively with money laundering, due to the constant inflow and outflow of foreign funds.[131] This phenomenon is visible as a certain number of civil society entities behave in conformity with the principles of the so-called NGO-business and fishing in troubled waters.[132]

In order to tackle this problem, in the last couple of years external actors have pushed for increased transparency of CSOs, especially with regard to their financial operations. Since the end of the 1990s, organizations have started publishing their financial audit reports in the media so as to increase the transparency in their work. Still, these efforts have been minimal and have only

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126 Guner Ismail, Interview with the authors, March 2004.

127 Project "Southeastern Europe: New Means for Regional Analysis", International Institute for Democracy and Elections Assistance. Available at: <www.idea.int/balkans> (April 10th, 2004).

128 "Civil society in transition" – National human development report.

129 Daniela Dimitroska, Interview with the authors, March 2004.

130 Mirjana Najcevska, Interview with the authors, September 2007.

131 Martin Martinoski, Interview with the authors, March 2004.

132 "Civil society in transition" – National human development report.

slightly improved the image of the civil society, which is remains generally perceived as a non-transparent sector.[133] Most of the interviewees linked this problem with the financial dependence on foreign funds. Due to their foreign financial support, CSOs are accountable to their external donors, rather than the public in their domestic setting.[134] One can expect that this tendency will decrease with the increased domestic financial support for the work of CSOs. Nevertheless, further efforts are needed in this direction in order improve significantly the image of the civil society sector with respect to its transparency.

4.5 Division on ethnic lines

In the case of Macedonia, ethnic division is an important contextual factor operating simultaneously with the transitional problems of civil society building. Macedonia is a country with deep ethnic cleavages, especially between the majority of ethnic Macedonians and Albanians. CSOs reflect the general societal division, i.e., the majority of them are divided upon ethnic lines. On the ground, most of the organizations in Skopje, the capital, are multiethnic; however, the organizations in most other cities are clustered around specific communities.[135] A clear example of the division along ethnic lines is the existence of two Macedonian, one Albanian and one Turkish umbrella organization of women's organizations.

In this setting, external actors have not had a consistent approach to the direction of development of CSOs with respect to the multi-ethnic character of the Macedonian society. Their policy has been one of wandering around, without a clear direction.[136] The activities of external actors have also been weakly coordinated in this respect, undermining the effectiveness of their work.[137] In most cases, external actors have attempted to bring about multi-ethnic organizations and projects benefiting all ethnic groups. The basic requirements in the international guidelines for funding commonly are multi-ethnic composition of the CSOs.

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133 Silva Pesic, Interview with the authors, September 2007.

134 Sasho Klekovski, Interview with the authors, September 2007.

135 Sasho Klekovski, Interview with the authors, September 2007.

136 Mirjana Najcevska, Interview with the authors, September 2007.

137 Mirjana Najcevska, Interview with the authors, September 2007.

Thus, formally, CSOs need to be multi-ethnic in order to obtain funding. However, several interviewees have raised concerns over the trend of a purely declaratively presentation of CSOs as multi-ethnic in order to obtain foreign funding.[138] The multi-ethnic composition of the CSOs is a precondition for funding, thus, the CSOs are forced to represent themselves as multi-ethnic, forging their real membership data.[139] These requirements have also led to the founding of CSOs working on inter-ethnic reconciliation, most of which have lasted for a very short period.[140] In this manner, the requirement for multi-ethnic CSOs is formally bypassed. Thus, while Macedonia has a substantial number of CSOs working on interethnic relations, their work is impeded by their mono-ethnic structure.[141] The 1999 UNDP National Report on civil society in relation to the ethnic composition of CSOs denotes that despite significant positive changes in terms of its growing number, the civil society has not yet developed its own identity. It is internally fragmented, uncoordinated and ethno-centric.[142]

Quite opposite to this dominant direction towards multi-ethnic CSOs, there have been instances when external actors have targeted funds for certain communities.[143] A clear example of this tendency was the distribution of humanitarian aid during the both the Kosovo crisis and the internal conflict in Macedonia in 2001. Our interviewees emphasized that the foreign humanitarian aid was distributed in accordance with the ethnic division of society. UN agencies distributed information in Albanian and Macedonian to two different organizations, strengthening the ethnic perception of the respective organizations.[144] These activities of external actors in most cases were perceived as conflicting with

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138 Martin Martinoski, Dusko Hristov, Interview with the authors.

139 Martin Martinoski, Jasmina Friscik, Daniela Dimitroska, Interview with the authors, March 2004

140 Sasho Klekovski, Interview with the authors, September 2007.

141 Nicolet, Claude. "The Interrelationship between the Evolution of Civil Society and Progress in Regional Security: The Balkans", Columbia International Affairs Online available at <www.ciaonet.org >

142 Civil society in transition" – National human development report, UNDP, 12.

143 Zoran Stojkovski, Daniela Dimitroska. Interviews with the authors, March 2004.

144 Sasho Klekovski,. "The role of the NGOs during the crisis in Macedonia", Graganski Svet, No.13, February 2002. (Authors' translation) Available at: <http://www.graganskisvet.org.mk/default-mk.asp?ItemID=03FEA24D87BAAB41A99D384BE1122C93> (April 5th, 2004) .

their attempts to bring about the creation and support of CSOs representing all communities.

It is commonly accepted that the international involvement in this segment of civil society has largely failed because most of the initiatives were not supported by corresponding domestic structures.[145] The lack of coordination and contextual knowledge among external actors has been decisive for the failure of some of the international efforts in this area.[146] An illustrative example is the campaign for support of the OFA in 2001, implemented directly by external actors without domestic partnership. The TV campaign, among other things, displayed a woman hanging clothes in a backyard with a pool in the background, depicting the conflict ridden city of Gostivar. Unfortunately, the population could not relate with this picture, since there were hardly any houses with swimming pools in the conflict ridden cities.[147] This example is just one of many indicating external actors' common lack of contextual knowledge, thereby highlighting the need for employing and working with local staff in order to increase the possibility of successful external interventions.

5. Conclusions

This study has examined the impact of external actors on the development of civil society in the Republic of Macedonia since independence. The study operated within the framework of civil society as an element of democratic consolidation and is based on qualitative methodology. The presented analysis of the external intervention in civil society building in Macedonia indicates that external actors have had significant influence on the establishment of CSOs in the country. Examining the influence of external actors on the financing of CSOs, their origin, agenda setting, public trust and the ethnic division of CSOs, the study puts forward conclusions on the strengths and weaknesses of the strategies of external actors in civil society building.

With respect to the financing of CSOs, as the first element under examination, the analysis shows that due to the minimal domestic

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145 Sasho Klekovski, Interview with the authors, September 2007.

146 Mirjana Najcevska, Interview with the authors, September 2007.

147 Sasho Klekovski, Interview with the authors, September 2007.

financial support, external funds were indispensable for the development of civil society in Macedonia. The financial support has, on the one hand, facilitated the development of CSOs, but has, at the same time, contributed to the establishment of an excessively donor-oriented civil society sector. Indirectly, the reliance on external funds has impeded the development of domestic instruments of CSOs support. In turn, the dependence of CSOs on foreign support has had a negative impact on the development of a genuine civil society as an element of democratic consolidation.

Financial support from external actors has significantly influenced the second element of the study – the establishment of the CSOs. In this sense, external actors have undoubtedly initiated the establishment of numerous CSOs, which on the long run have not proven sustainable. The external actors have had significant influence over the establishment of CSOs predominantly working in the area of ethnic reconciliation, most of which were established from the top, without any rooting in the public.

Examination of CSOs' agenda setting process points to a set of mixed conclusions. First, agenda setting has been predominantly a top-down process which has not always corresponded to the immediate public concerns. The lack of CSOs working on social inclusion and poverty reduction, primary concerns of the population, is a clear indicator of this tendency. On the other hand, the practice of coupling domestic and international staff has resulted in positive outcomes and programs tailored to the needs of the local context. Still, most external actors did not internalize this approach and hence the impact of external actors on agenda setting has not always been positive.

The reliance on external actors' funding and the link between CSOs and external actors has significantly influenced public trust in CSOs and is an element under consideration in this study. In turn, the analysis shows that the public, during the course of transition, has perceived CSOs as predominantly serving foreign interests. In addition, the lack of transparency in distributing aid and the low value associated with self organization in society have reinforced public distrust of civil society.

The analysis of the impact of external actors on the ethnic division of CSOs, as the last element of this paper, points to a set of contradictory conclusions. The data indicates that although fostering multi-ethnicity was high on the agenda of external actors, no consistent policy on this issue is found in the external actors' programmes. In this respect, the external actors have followed formal guidelines which were not enforced in practice. External actors in most cases accommodated the existent ethnic segregation in CSOs, and in some cases they facilitated it.

Overall, the findings indicate a significant disparity between the formal and substantive indicators of external actors' influence on civil society building and ultimately democratic consolidation. The analysis of the impact of external actors on the development of civil society in the Republic of Macedonia shows that focusing on the formal aspects of civil society building is not sufficient. The external actors' approach has not always responded to the contextual peculiarities of Macedonia, as a multi-ethnic country with an extremely low level of public activism and no tradition of voluntary organizing. This study therefore highlights the importance of contextual knowledge for the success of external actors' programmes and substantive impact on the democratic consolidation of post-communist countries.

This research primarily contributes to the contextual literature on development of civil society in Macedonia and provides useful findings for comparison with other transitional countries. At the same time, its findings are beneficial to transitional literature with specific relevance for civil society building in multi-ethnic countries with deep ethnic cleavages.

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CIVIL SOCIETY, DEMOCRACY AND GOOD GOVERNANCE IN AFRICA

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Abstract

This article analyzes the role of civil society in promoting democracy and good governance in Africa. It begins by exploring the debate about what constitutes civil society in Africa. The article argues that the conventional notion of civil society, which restricts its constitutive elements to only western-type NGOs, is not useful for the analysis of civil society in Africa. Such notion of civil society undermines the contributions of traditional organizations to the deepening of democracy and good governance in the continent. This article adopts an expanded notion of civil society that allows for the analysis of the role of both traditional and modern organizations in Africa. It shows the contributions of civil society to democracy and good governance in Africa, focusing on the struggles for decolonization and demilitarization, the promotion of social justice, state performance, popular participation in policymaking and transparency in governance.

1. Introduction

In the past two decades, the idea of civil society has attracted tremendous attention in political and developmental discourse. This is because political theory presents civil society as a crucial agent for promoting democracy and development. This article examines the role of civil society in promoting democracy and good governance in Africa. In order to lay a strong theoretical background for the analysis, the article begins by exploring the debate about what constitutes the civil society in Africa. Although the term civil society is widely used in academic and policy circles, it has yet to acquire a commonly accepted meaning. Definitions of civil society are bewilderingly diverse and the differences between them are often rooted in alternative social

and political philosophies[1]. Political theorists of Greek, Roman, Liberal, and Marxist backgrounds have attempted to conceptualize civil society. These scholars explore the complexity of the concept, showing different dimensions of civil society such as the material (Hegel, Marx and Engels), organizational (de Tocqueville and Ferguson), and ideological (Gramsci and Havel). Debates about the historical and theoretical foundations of the concept of civil society reverberate in contemporary analyses[2].

The views emerging from these discussions focus on the pre-conditions for the composition of the civil society. Here, one notion of civil society seems dominant. This notion is rooted in the Western tradition of liberal-democratic theory, which identifies civic organizations such as advocacy groups in Europe and the United States of America as the main elements of the civil society[3]. A number of Western intellectuals and donor agencies that tend to use the terms "NGO" and "civil society" interchangeably have popularized this notion of civil society. These individuals and institutions see civil society as an important component of the political project of building and consolidating democracy around the world. They believe that efforts to globalize democracy must be accompanied by the creation and strengthening of civil society in places like Africa where it is either non-existent or at a nascent stage. The global civil society network CIVICUS, for instance, aims to "help advance regional, national and international initiatives to strengthen the capacity of

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1 See Jean Cohen and Andrew Arato, Civil Society and Political Theory (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1992).

2 See for example, Okechukwu Ibeanu, "Civil Society and Political Theory", *Nigerian Journal of International Affairs* vol. 26, No 2 (2000): 41-60; Alan Whaites "Let's Get Civil Society Straight: NGOs, the State, and Political Theory", in Development, NGOs, and Civil Society, ed. Deborah Eade (Oxford: Oxfam GB, 2000); Sheri Berman "Civil Society and the Collapse of the Weimar Republic", World Politics vol. 49, No. 3 (1997): 401-429; Lars Jorgensen, "What Are NGOs Doing in Civil Society?", in NGOs, Civil Society, and the State ed. Andrew Clayton (UK: INTRAC, 1996); John W. Harbeson, "Civil Society and Political Renaissance in Africa", in Civil Society and the State in Africa eds. John W. Harbeson, Donald Rothchild, and Naomi Chazan (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1994); Ellen Wood, "The Uses and Abuses of 'Civil Society'" in *The Socialist Register 1990* ed. Ralph Miliband (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1991); John Keane, ed., Civil Society and the State (London: Verso, 1988); Jean-Francois Bayart, "Civil Society in Africa", in Political Domination in Africa ed. Patrick Chabal (London: Oxford University Press, 1986).

3 These groups are devoted mainly to public interest causes – human rights, the environment, gender inequality, and democracy promotion.

civil society"[4]. Scholars refer to this Western perception of civil society as the conventional notion of civil society[5].

2. The Conventional Notion of Civil Society

The individuals and institutions that propagate the conventional notion of civil society restrict its constitutive elements to formal civic organizations and highlight the organizational aspects of civil society[6]. They argue that civil organizations must meet specific criteria, including[7]:

1.   Autonomy from both social interests and the state.
2.   Capacity for collective action that promotes interests or passions.
3.   Absence of an intention to govern the polity.
4.   Agreement to act within civil rules 'conveying mutual respect'.

The criteria also include the idea that "pronouncedly hierarchical associations do not qualify as civil associations because they are not *internally democratic*"[8].

The conventional notion of civil society views civic associations as organizations with formal structure that would permit the pursuit of specific civic interests. In other words, civic organizations include only those organizations that "agree to act within pre-established rules of a 'civil' nature; that is, conveying mutual respect"[9]. The organizations must eschew violence, respect pluralism, the law and other actors. Lawrence Whitehead extends this moral dimension arguing that "civil" should be construed as

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4 See CIVICUS website: www.civicus.org.

5 See Nelson Kasfir, "The Conventional Notion of Civil Society: A Critique", in *Civil Society and Democracy in Africa* ed. Nelson Kasfir (London: Frank Cass, 1998).

6 The organizational aspects of the civil society include voluntarism, independent associational life and community spirit.

7 See Philippe Schmitter, "Civil Society East and West", in *Consolidating the Third Wave Democracies: Themes and Perspectives* eds. Larry Diamond, Marc F. Plattner, Yun-han Chu and Hung-mao Tien (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997).

8 Axel Hadenius and Fredrik Uggla, "Making Civil Society Work, Promoting Democratic Development: What can states and Donors Do?" *World Development*, vol. 24, No. 10 (1996): 1621-1639.

9 Hadenius and Uggla, "Making Civil Society Work," 1628.

"civility"[10]. In other words, civic organizations should act not only within constraints of legal or pre-established rules, but also with a sense of respect for the opinion and feelings of others.

The above criteria narrow the concept of civil society, allowing for the predominance of what I call the "political conception of civil society"[11]. The political conception of civil society stems from the conventional notion of civil society. It limits the constitutive elements of the civil society only to "civic" organizations that pursue public interest through "civil" means. Thus, the key issues underlying civil society include the idea of civility, voluntarism, economic freedom, citizenship, rights, rule of law and democratic representation.

The political conception of civil society excludes traditional organizations in the mainstream of African public space. This is due to the inability of these organizations to measure up to the "civility" criteria. African "associational life" is most often made up of "ascriptive groupings rather than voluntary ones, and that may be entwined with the state and ravaged by outside forces (ethnicity, sectarianism, etc)"[12]. Peter Ekeh notes that:

> The...problem confronting the successful adoption of the elements of civil society in Africa concerns the relationship between individuals and kinship...Kinship will continue to be relevant in the lives of millions of Africans who are either threatened by the state or else ignored by its agencies. Yet kinship distorts the expansiveness and universalism of civil society. Civil society requires that the worth of the unique individual be recognized beyond his or her ethnic group[13].

Some scholars argue that ascriptive organizations such as communal and religious associations tend to undermine the civil

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10 Lawrence Whitehead, "Bowling in the Bronx: The uncivil Interstices between Civil and Political Society", in *Civil Society: Democratic Perspectives,* eds. Robert Fine and Shirinrai Rai (London: Frank Cass, 1997: 100-101).

11 See Nkwachukwu Orji, "Civil Society and Elections in Nigeria: Reflections on the 2003 General Elections", in Election and Democratic Consolidation in Nigeria eds. Godwin Onu and Abubakar Momoh (Lagos: NPSA, 2005: 558)

12 Rooy A. Van, Civil Society and the Aid Industry (London: Earthscan, 1998: 22)

13 Peter Ekeh, "Civil Society and the Construction of Freedom in African History". Keynote Address to Wilberforce Conference on Civil Society in Africa, Central State University, Wilberforce, Ohio, 1998.

society[14]. In order to save African civil society from the destructive activities of the ascriptive organizations, institutions like the World Bank, USAID, and INTRAC are deeply involved in efforts to build and strengthen the African civil society. They pursue this task within the overall framework of democracy promotion[15]. These institutions justify their activities by maintaining that formal organizational activity in the United States and Western Europe has taught its members democratic skills and promoted interests which governments might otherwise overlook. As such, they argue that the development of civil society organizations is very crucial in Africa in order to promote democracy and good governance. Since Africa is faced with the challenges of state failure and democratic disappointments, many Africans tend to embrace this conception of civil society.

The problems with the conventional notion of civil society are numerous. First of all, attempts to analyze African civil society based on this notion leads one to an empirically difficult task of deciding which civic organizations are truly "civil" as opposed to those that may be classified as "pre-civil", "uncivil" or "anti-civil". Secondly, because many traditional organizations in Africa are excluded from the civil society, most parts of Africa's rich associational life are left out in the analysis of the continent's civil society. Finally, excluding some traditional organizations from the African civil society results in the exclusion of the interests they represent. This makes the claim that civil society produces democracy contemptuous. If democracy means the opportunity for universal citizen participation in governance, one wonders the sort of democracy that can be fashioned by organizations that explicitly do not represent issues of interest to a large number of citizens. Considering the shortcomings of the conventional notion

14 See Naomi Chazan, "Africa's Democratic Challenge" World Policy Journal, vol. 9, No. 2 (1992): 279– 308.

15 On democracy promotion in Africa, see among others, Dessalegn Rahmato and Meheret Ayenew, Democracy Assistance to Post-Conflict Ethiopia: Building Local Institutions? Working Paper No.27 (Hague: Netherlands Institute of International Relations, 2004); Gordon Crawford, The European Union and Democracy Promotion in Africa: The Case of Ghana. POLIS Working Paper No.10 (Leeds: University of Leeds, 2004); Julie Hearn, Foreign Political Aid, Democratization, and Civil Society in Ghana in the 1990s. CDD-Ghana Research Paper No.5 (Accra: Center for Democracy and Development, 2000); Thomas Carothers, Aiding Democracy Abroad: The Learning Curve (Washington: Carnegie Endowment, 1999); and Joe Oloka-Onyango and John-Jean Barya, "Civil Society and the Political Economy of Foreign Aid in Uganda" Democratization, vol. 4, No. 2 (1997): 113 – 138.

of civil society, the next section presents an alternative notion of civil society that would be useful in analyzing the role of civil society in democracy and good governance.

3. Looking at Civil Society Differently

The core problem of the conventional notion of civil society is that it excludes traditional organizations in Africa from the analysis of the civil society. Since the success of democratization and good governance depends on popular consent or broad acceptance of the process of acquiring and utilizing power, it is imperative for civil society organizations to have deep social roots in the society. Indeed, some African rulers have enormous power to manipulate the democratic process because they represent the interests of the strong social forces that benefit from their regime. Therefore, the prodemocracy groups that oppose these rulers must also have strong roots in the society. Although donor driven NGOs play important roles in Africa, they have tenuous ties with the citizens[16]. As such, the struggle for democracy and good governance in Africa cannot be sustained through the sole effort of these NGOs.

Because donor driven NGOs cannot sustain the struggle for democracy and good governance in Africa, there is a need to reexamine the exclusion of traditional African organizations from the analysis of civil society. This is especially important because it is not in all cases that these organizations are unwilling to accept rules of "civility", compromises and democratic decisions. For instance, if communal and religious organizations perceive that state institutions offer them opportunities for rewards in the future, they may be more likely to make compromises and follow the "rules of the game". It is loss of faith in the ability of state institutions to protect their interests that push these organizations into "uncivil" behaviors[17]. Therefore, "uncivil" behaviors depend on the failure of the state to reconcile various special interests in the society. In order to have a clear understanding of the role of civil society in promoting democracy

16 Thomas Carothers, "Civil Society: Think Again" *Foreign Policy*, 117 (2000): 18-29.

17 This is illustrated by the case of the communities in Nigeria's Niger Delta. See Okechukwu Ibeanu, "Ogoni-oil, Resource Flow and Conflict in Rural Nigeria", in Managing the Globalized Environment ed. T. Granfelt (London: Intermediate Technology Publications, 1999).

and good governance in Africa, it is essential to widen the concept of civil society. Considering that traditional associations such as religious, communal, and occupational associations have a genuine base in Africa, it is useful to include them in the analysis of civil society in the continent. In order to examine the contributions of traditional civil society organization to democracy and good governance in Africa, I would adopt what I call the "sociological conception of civil society".

The sociological conception of civil society expands the concept of civil society to include a wide range of societal groups. It sees the civil society as a realm composed of all sorts of associations and organizations that exist outside of the state and market, and working to protect "collective" interests. It includes the gamut of organizations that political scientists traditionally label interest groups – advocacy NGOs, labor unions, professional associations, chambers of commerce, communal associations, students' unions, cultural associations, and sports clubs. The sociological conception of civil society is useful for the analysis of civil society organizations in Africa because it permits the combination of what Peter Ekeh described as a 'civic public realm' and 'primordial public realm'[18]. The civic and primordial public realms encompass both traditional and modern civil society organizations.

Based on the above, my conception of African civil society recognizes all groups outside the ambit of the state and market as civil society organizations. This notion of the civil society is based on a tripartite view of the society, which recognizes the existence of three sectors in the society - the state, market and civil society[19]. Each of the sectors function to make and enforce laws, provide avenue for exchange of goods and services, and serve as arena for debate and common endeavor, respectively. Different organizational forms have evolved fitting into the specific conditions of each of the sectors. The government and its agencies are the organizational form of the state. The firms,

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18 Ekeh argued that one of the most important legacies of colonialism in Africa is the emergence of two public realms – the primordial and civic realms. The primordial realm is based on cultures and traditions of the people, while the civic realm is associated with colonial rule and the penetration of Western culture. See Peter Ekeh, "Colonialism and the Two Publics in Africa: A Theoretical Statement" *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, vol. 17, No. 1 (1975): 91-112.

19 Jorgensen, "What Are NGOs Doing in Civil Society?" 36-37.

enterprises or corporations are the organizational form of the market. The corresponding organizational form of the civil society is the public benefit and mutual benefit organizations.

On one hand, public benefit organizations are set up to serve the common interest of society, and their mission is based on common perceptions and values of self-selected citizens who are assumed to be public spirited. Those who govern the organizations are accountable to their governance structure, and not to those who benefit from their services. The organizations may act in the interests of certain groups in society, but do not necessarily have a mandate to be their representatives. Examples of public benefit organizations include philanthropic organizations, civic organizations, advocacy groups, as well as welfare and developmental organizations. The mutual benefit organizations, on the other hand, are formed to benefit its members. These organizations include cooperative societies, trade unions, communal associations, and professional associations. Mutual benefit organizations are in principle formed by and accountable to its members. If members do not like what the leadership of the organization is doing, they are at liberty to change it. The beneficiaries of the organization are the same as those responsible for the governance of the organization; this is what distinguishes mutual benefit from public benefit organizations.

But generally, organizations in the civil society create room for debate on the direction of social development and make it possible for people to influence and control both the state and market. They also:

> ...supplement political parties as varied and flexible mechanism through which citizens define and articulate a broad range of interests, meet local needs, and make demands on the government... provide training grounds for democratic citizenship, develop the political skills of their members, recruit new political leaders, stimulate political participation, and educate the broader public on a wide variety of public interest issues...serve as checks on the relentless tendency of the state to centralize its powers and evade civic accountability and control[20].

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20 David C. Korten, *Getting to the 21st Century: Voluntary Action and the Global Agenda* (West Harford: Kumanian, 1990): 99.

They provide a platform for citizens of a political community to take measures and act for what they think is beneficial to the entire community. With regards to democracy and good governance, the basis for participation in civil society organizations is the right of each individual to participate in societal affairs, and the recognition that periodic elections and referenda, if properly conducted or held at all, are insufficient channels for popular participation in governance. In the following sections, I will apply my conception of the civil society to the analysis of the contributions of civil society to the promotion of democracy and good governance in Africa. The analysis will draw largely from the Nigerian experience.

4. Civil Society and Democracy in Africa

This section adopts the sociological conception of civil society outlined above in the analysis of the contributions of civil society to the process of democratization in Africa. The dawn of civil society activity in Africa preceded the advent of the colonial state. Civil society in pre-colonial Africa was organized around age-grades, women, youth, and brotherhood associations. These traditional organizations provided the impetus for the emergence of new forms of voluntary associations during the colonial period (for instance, hometown associations, labor unions, and professional associations). The repressive and disruptive nature of the colonial state galvanized the transformation of African civil society. The colonial state was janus-faced. On one side, the state governed a racially defined citizenry, bounded by rule of law and an associated regime of rights. On the other side, the state ruled over subjects that were under a regime of political and economic coercion[21]. Consequently, individuals who belonged to the latter category organized themselves and began to confront the state (symbolized by the native authorities and the colonial administration). Many voluntary associations became openly political – offering the people a voice in their opposition to the indignities of colonial rule and demands for self-determination[22].

21 Mahmood Mamdani, *Citizens and Subjects: Contemporary Africa and the legacy of Late Colonialism*. (Ibadan: John Archers, 2002).

22 Michael Bratton, "Civil Society and Associational Life in Africa" *World Politics*, Vol. 41, No. 3 (1989): 407-430.

The quest for democracy and good governance is thus, the core element behind the growth of civil society activity in Africa. The civil society's contributions to democratization in Africa during the colonial and post-colonial periods center on the struggle for decolonialization and demilitarization.

4.1 Civil society and the struggle for decolonialization

In various parts of Africa, civil society during the colonial era was made-up of mainly small associations, which were informal, minimally organized, and concerned mainly with confronting local authorities. Although some scholars argue that collective action during the colonial era does not constitute civil society activity - choosing to refer to it as mere "associational life"[23], others insist that collective action against the colonial state constitutes civil society struggle[24]. Civil society organizations in colonial Africa had deep roots in the "primordial public realm" and constituted what is referred as the "grassroots civil society"[25].

Movements of resistance against colonial penetration and occupation dominated civil society engagement in colonial Africa. The imposition of alien political, economic, and social arrangements provoked revolts from the local people. Civil society organizations were constituted to provide psychological and emotional outlets for the tension and frustration generated by colonialism and rapid cultural change. As colonialism progressed, the less organized local movements against the colonial authorities began to give way to the rise of a more organized nationalist movement. These developments marked the evolution of a strong mechanism for the aggregation and articulation of diverse local interests and sentiments into a broadly organized movement explicitly aimed at dislodging the authoritarian colonial state and achieving self-government.

Civil society in colonial Africa was actively involved in various forms of rural and urban protests against the colonial state. Usually precipitated and fed by specific grievances, these anti-

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23 See Chazan, "Africa's Democratic Challenge".

24 See Bratton, "Civil Society and Associational Life in Africa" and Kasfir, "The Conventional Notion of Civil Society".

25 Jorgensen, "What Are NGOs Doing in Civil Society?" 47.

colonial revolts were often territorially uncoordinated and haphazard in their occurrence. However, they reveal the tendency of the educated class residing in urban areas to mobilize and provoke uprisings in the interior areas as the 1918 Egba Uprising in Southwest Nigeria amply demonstrates[26]. The uprisings also exposed the amazing capacity of the people to initiate and execute organized collective action that at times transcended clan and tribal boundaries, as shown by the Aba Women's Riots of 1929 in Southeast Nigeria[27].

On several occasions during the colonial era, residents of major urban centers in Africa vigorously protested various oppressive and onerous actions of the colonial state[28]. These rural and urban mass movements contributed tremendously in creating a synergy between grassroots civil society organizations and intermediate associations that operated mainly in the cities. But besides the rural-urban synergy, they were also a collaboration between educated elites and some Africans who were leaders of religious organizations. There are many examples of the explicit use of Christianity, Islam, and indigenous religions to promote the nationalist struggles. During the Zimbabwean liberation war, a close relationship developed between the nationalist guerrillas and many traditional Shona spirit mediums, drawing on the belief that the ancestral spirits were the defenders of the land[29]. In Northern Nigeria, Ahmadu Bello constantly stressed the relationship between his brand of nationalism and his role as a crusader for Islam[30]. While in Southern Nigeria, churches such as the United Native African Church and the African Church Incorporated seceded from white-dominated churches to enlist in the struggle against colonialism[31]. The collaboration between

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26 James Coleman, *Nigeria: Background to Nationalism* (Benin City: Broburg and Wistrom, 1958).

27 Nina Mba, *Nigerian Women Mobilized* (Berkeley: University of California, 1982).

28 In Nigeria for example, measures such as the proposal in 1895 for a house and land tax on inhabitants of Lagos, the Land Acquisition Ordinance of 1908, and the introduction of Water Rate in 1908, all received a resounding opposition from the residents of Lagos. See Coleman, Nigeria.

29 Terence Ranger, *Peasant Consciousness and Guerrilla War in Zimbabwe: A Comparative Study* (London: James Currey, 1985): 137-222.

30 Anthony Kirk-Greene, "His Eternity, His Eccentricity, or His Exemplarity? A Further Contribution to the Study of H. E. the African Head of State" African Affairs, vol. 90, No. 359 (1991): 163-188.

31 Useful accounts of the activities of the separatist churches can be found in Geoffry Parrinder, Religion in an African City (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1953); James Benin Webster, The African Churches Among the Yoruba 1888-1922 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964); John Ade F. Ajayi, Christian Missions in Nigeria 1841-

leaders of the political and religious wings of the nationalist movement provided a notable link between religious rhetoric and the nationalist struggle[32]. The activities of these separatist religious groups caused the colonialists serious apprehension, because of the level of intensity with which they fueled the undercurrent of frustration and grievance that ultimately found an outlet in political nationalism.

Meanwhile, the rise of local mass media organizations, the emergence of professional and community-based organizations, and the growth of the idea of trade unionism followed the growth of indigenous religious organizations. The mass media in particular made an outstanding impact on the development of African civil society during the colonial era[33]. The proliferation of professional and community-based associations was also crucial to the growth of civil society in Africa, especially as they provided an avenue for the mobilization, recruitment and training of political leaders[34]. The idea of collective action among wage-earning groups also became part of the African civil society and the decolonialization struggle. In Nigeria, this idea first took root in 1912 when African Clerks in the service of the colonial government organized under the Southern Nigeria Civil Service Union; the idea quickly became widespread. As members of new occupational groups became increasingly aware of the links that bound them together, organizational activity among them continued to expand. Obviously, the development of new economic forces and modes of production accelerated the tempo of social mobilization and opposition against the colonial state. The organizational activities generated by the struggle for decolonialization accelerated the development of African civil

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1891: The Making of a New Elite (London: Longmans, 1965); E. A. Ayandele, *The Missionary Impact on Modern Nigeria* 1842-1914: A Political and Social Analysis (London: Longmans, 1966); Kalu Ogbu, Christianity in West Africa: The Nigerian Story (Ibadan: Daystar, Press, 1978); and Rosalind Hackett, *New Religious Movements in Nigeria* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 1987).

32 Patrick J. Furlong, "Azikiwe and the National Church of Nigeria and the Cameroons: A Case Study of the Political Use of Religion in African Nationalism" African Affairs vol. 91, No. 364 (1992): 433-452.

33 In Nigeria for example, the Lagos Weekly Record was about the earliest newspaper established. The Record was very bold and active in the fight against colonialism. It was noted that: "[T]he record was so powerful that at one time, on the account of its uncompromising attitude in the national interest, all foreign advertisements were withdrawn, but it stood its ground unflinchingly...(cited in Coleman, Nigeria, 185).

34 See Coleman, Nigeria.

society and also played a significant role in the exit of colonial administrations.

4.2 Civil society and the struggle for demilitarization

Political independence preceded military intervention in the politics of many African countries[35]. As a result, the focus of civil society activity in these countries shifted towards mobilizing popular resistance against military dictatorship. Moreover, the economic difficulties arising from bad governance and the restrictions imposed by the military on human freedom combined to encourage mass mobilization, political organization and political activism in many African countries[36]. These factors also encouraged the creation of new civil society organizations and the strengthening of the existing ones. The strength and vibrancy of the civil society compelled many African states to make occasional, though partial and reversible concessions to popular forces.

In post-colonial Africa, collective action and pressures to strengthen civil society and foster democracy have come mainly from students[37], intellectuals[38], workers, professionals, and more

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35 See Claude Welch Jr., Soldier and State in Africa: A Comparative Analysis of Military Intervention and Political Change (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1970) and Ali Mazrui, "Military Intervention in African Politics", in African Today ed. Ralph Uwechue (London: African Books Ltd, 1991).

36 See Peter Gibbon, Yusuf Bangura, and Arve Ofstad, Authoritarianism, Democracy, and Adjustment: The Politics of Economic Reform in Africa (Uppsala: Scandinavian Institute of African Studies, 1992) and Adebayo Olukoshi, The Politics of Structural Adjustment in Nigeria (London: James Currey, 1993).

37 For detailed accounts of the role of the student movements in the struggle for democracy and good governance in Nigeria, see Said Adejumobi, "Structural Adjustment, Students' Movement and Popular Struggles in Nigeria, 1986-1996", in *Identity Transformation and Identity Politics Under Structural Adjustment in Nigeria* ed. Attahiru Jega (Kano: Centre for Research and Documentation, 2003); Albert I. Olawale, "University Students in the Politics of Structural Adjustment in Nigeria: Between Liberalization and Oppression", in The Politics of Structural Adjustment in Africa eds. Thandika Mkandawire and Adebayo Olukoshi (Dakar: CODESRIA, 1995); Kole Shettima, "Structural Adjustment and the Student Movement in Nigeria" Review of African Political Economy, vol. 20, No. 56 (1993): 83-91; Darlington Iwarimie-Jaja, "The Role of Student Power in Nigeria" *Philosophy and Social Action*, vol. 18, No. 4 (1992): 28-36; and Abubakar Momoh, "Students and Democratic Struggle in Africa" *Philosophy and Social Action*, vol. 18, No. 4 (1992): 37-46.

38 For accounts of the struggles of Nigerian intellectuals, see Academic Staff Union of Universities, ASUU and 1986 Education Crisis in Nigeria (Ibadan: ASUU, 1996); Bjorn Beckman and Attahiru Jega, "Scholars and Democratic Politics in Nigeria" *Review of African Political Economy*, vol. 22, No. 64 (1995): 167-181; Yusuf

recently, pro-democracy and human rights NGOs. The labor movement is perhaps the most important part of the post-colonial civil society in Africa. In Nigeria, for instance, the labor movement is the largest autonomous interest group[39]. Like in many African countries, Nigerian workers are organized into a central trade union organization – the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC), of which all industrial unions in the country are affiliated[40]. The NLC forged strong linkages or coalition with students, intellectuals, and progressive professional associations like the Nigerian Bar Association (NBA) and the Nigerian Medical Association (NMA) in the struggle for democracy and good governance[41]. The Congress has also on several occasions outlined alternative strategies for national development[42].

Since the 1980s, there has been a steady decline in the vibrancy of African civil society. This has resulted in the failure of civil society organizations to sustain their pressures for democratization. Analysts attribute this situation to several

Bangura, Intellectuals, Economic Reform and Social Change: Constraints and Opportunities in the Formation of a Nigerian Technocracy (Dakar: CODESRIA, 1994); and Attahiru Jega, Nigerian Academics under Military Rule (Stockholm: Department of Political Science, University of Stockholm, 1994).

39 See John Ohiorhenuan, *Capital and the State in Nigeria* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1987: 162).

40 For historical and comparative analyses of the labor movement in Nigeria, see T. M. Yesufu, Introduction to Industrial Relations in Nigeria (London: Oxford University Press, 1962); Wogu Ananaba, The Trade Union Movement in Nigeria (London: C. Hurst and Company, 1969); Robin Cohen, Labour and Politics in Nigeria (London: Heinemann, 1974); Adrian Peace, "Industrial Protest in Nigeria", in Sociology and Development eds. Emmanuel de Kadt and Gavin Williams (London: Tavistock, 1974); Onyeka C. Nwanunobi, "Wage Labour and the Politics of Nigeria and Kenya: A Comparative Study" *African Studies Review* vol. 17, No. 1 (1974): 77-104; and Tayo Fashoyin, "Nigerian Labour and the Military: Towards Exclusion?" Labour,Capital and Society, vol. 23, No. 1 (1990): 12-37.

41 On Labour encounters with the Nigerian state, see Dafe Otobo, "The Nigerian General Strike of 1981" Review of African Political Economy, vol. 8, No. 22 (1981): 65-81; Dafe Otobo, "Organized Labour and Political Process in Nigeria", in Dafe Otobo (ed), Labour Relations in Nigeria Vol. 1 (Lagos: Malthouse Press, 1992); John P. Tuman, "Organized Labour Under Military Rule: The Nigerian Labour Movement, 1985-1992" Studies in Comparative International Development, vol. 29, No. 3 (1994): 26-44; Julius Ihonvbere, "Organized Labour and the Struggle for Democracy in Nigeria" *African Studies Review*, vol. 40, No. 3 (1997): 77-110; and Jimi Adesina, "Adjustment and the Transformation of Labour Identity: What's New and Does it Matter?", in Identity Transformation and Identity Politics Under Structural Adjustment in Nigeria ed. Attahiru Jega (Kano: Centre for Research and Documentation, 2003).

42 See for example, Nigeria Labour Congress, Towards National Recovery: Nigeria Labour Congress' Alternatives (Lagos: NLC, 1985); and Nigeria Labour Congress, "The Position of the National Executive Council of the Nigeria Labour Congress on the June 12 Presidential Elections", Port Harcourt-Nigeria, July 1993.

factors of which economic consideration is the most notable[43]. It is argued that the material bases of support for civil society organizations in African were eroded by the protracted economic crisis that gripped the continent from the early 1980s as well as the stringent neoliberal adjustment measures imposed with a view to resolving it. Consequently, many associations lost much of their organizational capacity to the extent that the state found them easy targets for co-optation or neutralization. The weakness of the private sector and the pervasive dependence on the state induced subservience toward state authority. Gyimah-Boadi notes that:

> The middle-class professionals and intellectuals who run key public institutions tend to be understandably preoccupied with their own economic survival, which often prevents their institutions from helping civil society to checkmate state hegemony. Judges depend on government for their appointments and for their operational budgets, and have few opportunities for lucrative private practice should they resign [or lose their job]. They can scarcely afford to maintain a posture of strict independence. Private newspapers fear losing much-needed revenue from government advertisement...[44].

Given the state dominance in the formal sector (especially in the areas of investment and employment), many organizations found it difficult to exist without receiving support from the government. Again, with the majority of the middle and working classes tied to government through employment, and the private sector dependent on government for contracts, subsidized credit, and other favors, the basis for individual and associational autonomy has become extremely weak.

The above situation notwithstanding, the civil society in Africa has managed to survive. Much of the lifeline to the contemporary African civil society has come from donor agencies and international civil society organizations. Both the donors and the NGOs assisted civil society organizations in Africa by offering

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43 Célestin Monga, "Eight Problems with African Politics", in Democratization in Africa eds. Larry Diamond and Marc F. Plattner (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999) and Emmanuel Gyimah-Boadi, "Civil Society in Africa," *Journal of Democracy* vol. 7, No. 2 (1996): 119-132.

44 Gyimah-Boadi, "Civil Society in Africa," 127-128.

them direct material and moral support[45]. The enormous amount of aid that came from International NGOs such as the National Endowment for Democracy, Westminster Foundation for Democracy, and the Political-party Foundation was instrumental to the establishment and proliferation of prodemocracy and human rights NGOs in Africa. In Nigeria, for example, NGOs like the Civil Liberty Organization (CLO), Constitutional Rights Project (CRP), Committee for Defense of Human Rights (CDHR), and Campaign for Democracy (CD) were at the forefront of the struggle for democracy. These organizations were active during the administrations of Generals Ibrahim Babangida and Sani Abacha, following the annulment of the 12 June 1993 presidential election and the extension of military rule. They organized mass protests across the country[46], and printed and distributed hundreds of thousands of leaflets exposing corruption, lawlessness, and abuse of power by the military regime. The groups urged Nigerians to take a final stand against military dictatorship and subversion of popular will. The activities of the prodemocracy NGOs inspired the traditional organizations such as professional, communal and trade association, and together, they all came out against the military. For the first time in Nigeria's post-civil war history, organizations in the civil society took measures that openly challenged the authority of the state and succeeded in mobilizing millions of Nigerians in both urban and rural areas, across ethnic, regional, religious, class, and gender lines, to defy the military and take a stand for democracy[47].

The democratic rebirth in Africa has changed the fundamental concern of the continent's civil society. Civil society organizations are now shifting their focus from establishing institutions of democracy to securing the institutions. Indeed, democracy in Africa faces the threat of overthrow by anti-democratic forces[48].

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45 For a comparative account of foreign support for civil society organizations Africa, see Mark Robinson, "Strengthening Civil Society in Africa: The Role of Foreign Political Aid", *IDS Bulletin* vol. 26, No. 2 (1995): 70-80.

46 See Tell, 19 July 1993.

47 Julius Ihonvbere and Timothy Shaw, Illusions of Power: Nigeria in Transition (Trenton, New Jersey: Africa World Press, 1998).

48 Ehimika Ifidon, "Transition from Democracy in Nigeria: Toward a Pre-emptive Analysis" African Journal of Political Science, vol. 7, No. 1 (2003): 109-128 and Bash Olasupo, ed. Electoral Violence in Nigeria: Issues and Perspectives (Ibadan: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, 2003).

In addition to the risk of relapse into authoritarian rule, democracy in Africa contends with a more insidious danger of non-performance, decay and possible retrogression into a hybrid regime somewhere between democracy and dictatorship. Consequently, the major challenge confronting the civil society in Africa is that of consolidating democracy and good governance.

5. African Civil Society and the Issue of Good Governance

The preceding discussion provides basic insights and understanding of the role of civil society in the enthronement of democracy in Africa. This section briefly examines the contributions of civil society to the promotion of good governance and consolidation of democracy. Good governance is an offshoot of democracy and it denotes responsive governance. Its hallmarks include the application of rule of law; the operation of a fair and efficient judicial system; the promotion of broad and popular involvement in political, social and economic processes; the development of the capacity to manage development; and the promotion of a culture of accountability and transparency in the management of public affairs[49]. The contributions of the African civil society to the consolidation of democracy and good governance can be analyzed under four headings: promotion of social justice, rights and the rule of law; enhancing state performance; promotion of popular participation in public policy making; and promotion of transparency in governance.

5.1 Promotion of social justice, rights and the rule of law

The first major area where the contribution of civil society organization to good governance in Africa manifests is in the area of promotion of social justice, rights and the rule of law[50]. There are two main dimensions to this issue:

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49 Walter O. Oyugi, "The Role of NGOs in Fostering Development and Good Governance at the Local Level in Africa with a Focus on Kenya" African Development, vol. XXIX, No. 4 (2004): 19-55.

50 On the role of the civil society to the promotion of human rights, see Bonny Ibhawoh, "The Promise of Constitutionalism and the Challenge of Militarism: Constraints and Possibilities of the Human Rights Movement in Nigeria" Democracy and Development: Journal of West African Affairs, vol. 3, No. 2 (2003): 16-36 and Remi Aiyede, "United We Stand: Labour Unions and Human Rights NGOs in the Democratization Process in Nigeria" Development in Practice, vol. 14, No. 1-2 (2004): 224-233 for a fine analysis of this subject.

1. The protective role of civil society organizations in shielding and sheltering individuals that repressive states threaten their rights. Civil society organizations achieve this by defending the rights of the vulnerable groups through the official legal process such as providing paralegal services to groups of citizens who do not have ready access to the courts.

2. The advocacy role of civil organizations in pressing for the implementation of existing laws or for the adoption of fresh legislative initiatives and institutional reforms that will enhance the application of rule of law and social justice[51].

5.2 Enhancing state performance

The quality and effectiveness of public expenditures and services are integral to good governance. Civil society organizations have contributed here by working directly with government in shaping, financing and delivering public services in a variety of ways. These have taken the form of public-private partnerships in which civil society organizations work closely with state institutions in designing and providing health, education, and other social services, mobilizing funds from among client groups and other sources, and monitoring quality and coverage of social services[52]. In some cases, this has created the basis for synergy in which state institutions acquire greater legitimacy and improve their performance by developing responsive working relationships with civil society that draw on reservoirs of social capital built up in local communities.

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51 For examples of this dimension, see Olisa Agbakoba and Udo Ilo, Where Did We Go Wrong?: A Review of the 2003/2004 Elections in Nigeria (Lagos: HURILAWS, 2004); Citizens' Forum for Constitutional Reform, Memoranda Submitted to the Presidential Committee on Provisions for and Practice of Citizenship and Rights in Nigeria and Presidential Committee on National Security in Nigeria (Lagos: CFCR, 2002); Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution, Strategic Conflict Assessment Report (Abuja: IPCR, 2002); Transition Monitoring Group, Registration of Voters 2002 (Abuja: TMG, 2002); and Joy Ezeilo, Gender, Politics and the Law (Enugu: WACOL, 1999).

52 For an interesting documentation of these activities in Nigeria, see Edith Nwanguma, "Visioning an All Stakeholders' Health System in Enugu State Through Strategic Communication" Health Partnership News – *PATHS Quarterly Newsletter* (Abuja: PATHS, 2004) and Amina Salihu, ed. *Summary Report of the Round Table Dialogue with Government Budgetary Agencies and Civil Society in Nigeria* (Lagos: CDD, 2003).

5.3 Promotion of popular participation in public policy making

In many African countries, civil society organizations have also played a prominent role in mobilizing the people to participate fully in politics and public affairs. Usually, wealthy and socially dominant groups in the society are better able to organize themselves and, by virtue of superior resources and social status, are able to exert considerable influence over public policy. In addition, they can form and support intermediary organizations to effectively represent and articulate their interests. However, the poor and socially disadvantaged groups - marginal peasants, landless laborers, artisans, informal sector workers, and urban slum dwellers - are usually much less able to exercise influence over public policy and resource allocations. Civil society organizations have intervened in this area by mobilizing the socially disadvantaged groups and articulating their demands at local and higher levels[53].

5.4 Promotion of transparency in governance

Civil society organizations in Africa have also contributed to good governance by pressing for the improvement of transparency in government and increasing the availability of information about policymaking and implementation. Activities undertaken by civil society organizations in this regard include the discovery, publication and dissemination of information about items of legislation, legal provisions, public expenditure allocations, the implementation of policy and programs, and special inquiries. Civil society organizations usually publish and circulate such information directly by groups, or through new or existing media outlets. Efforts to enhance transparency in government also contribute to poverty reduction by helping citizens monitor the delivery of development resources and check the appropriation of

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53 This form of social mobilization, interest articulation and representation is demonstrated in the position papers issued by civil society organizations. Good illustrations include, Centre for Democracy and Development/Partnership for Advocacy and Civic Education, Position Paper of the Working Group on the Nigerian 1999 Constitution and Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (Lagos: CDD) and Citizens' Forum for Constitutional Reform, The Position of Citizens' Forum for Constitutional Reform (CFCR) on the 1999 Constitution (Lagos: CFCR).

resources by bureaucrats and local elites[54]. This suggests a more activist role for the civil society, in which civic actors back up information gathering and dissemination activities with mobilization and public advocacy work.

6. Conclusion

The civil society has played a prominent role in the promotion of democracy and good governance in Africa. This role includes the struggle for decolonization and demilitarization as well as promotion of rule of law, popular participation in policy making, and transparency in governance. In order to provide a thorough analysis of the contributions of civil society to democracy in Africa, this article adopts the sociological conception of civil society. This conception extends the understanding of civil society to include a variety of organizations. These organizations range from contemporary advocacy NGOs that focus on issues of civil liberty, democracy, health and gender to traditional organizations like labor unions, professional associations, ethnic, and religious groups.

This article rejects the conventional notion of civil society as framework for analyzing the contribution of the civil society to democracy and good governance in Africa. It argues that any definitional notion that restricts constitutive elements of the civil society to only advocacy NGOs will leave out the role of the traditional organizations in the struggle for democracy in Africa. The article therefore underscores the need for scholars and practitioners to reflect the specific contexts as well as social and political environments within which civil society organizations operate in their analysis of the role of the civil society.

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54 See Nkwachukwu Orji, "Civil Society and Poverty Reduction in Africa" *African Journal of Political and Administrative Studies*, vol. 1, No. 1 (2004): 80-90.

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THE ROLE OF INTERNATIONAL POLICING IN POST-CONFLICT DEVELOPMENT: THE CASE OF LIBERIA

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Abstract

The United Nations has utilized international policing contingents in post-conflict peacekeeping missions for many decades. Their utility in stabilizing peace and the rule of law has been well recognized. Their direct impact on economic development, however, has been less discussed in the academic literature. This article explores the role that the policing element of the United Nations Mission in Liberia has had on the economic development of that country. This is discussed with special attention to Paul Collier's concept of the 'conflict trap' and how international police can help post-conflict states escape it.

1. Introduction

Since the 1960s police officers have been used in United Nations peacekeeping missions to help stabilize post-conflict situations. In the first missions in which they were deployed, police officers served mainly as monitors and instructors. Their missions and responsibilities have evolved over time and have grown so far as to include what are called executive policing missions, in which international police take over full law enforcement responsibility in the recipient country. In the past 40 years international police officers have been sent to Haiti, Kosovo, Cambodia, Mozambique, East Timor, Iraq, and Panama among many other places. The responsibilities of the police have varied with the goals of the given mission.

One of the roles of international policing contingents that doesn't get enough attention is the important part they play in economic development. Their importance to stability and peace has of course been recognized, that is usually their main purpose, but this has rarely been explicitly seen as directly contributing to economic development as it should be. The role that peace and

stability play in economic development has received attention in the scholarly literature most especially by Paul Collier who has detailed the problem of the "conflict trap." Yet even he, though he speaks at length about the need for peacekeeping soldiers, fails to realize the importance that international policing plays in helping to overcome these traps.

The current United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) provides a perfect opportunity to explore this function of international police officers more closely. UNMIL has been active in Liberia since the end of the most recent civil war in 2003 and the policing element of it has widely been considered to be one of its most important components. The establishment of an impartial and effective police force has been a cornerstone of Liberian development and much rides on the success of the international policing mission there.

This article will explore Liberia's development problems, especially as they relate to the conflict trap, and how international policing is contributing to Liberia's current and future economic growth. The paper is divided into three main sections. The first section describes Liberia's long struggle with civil war and how this has devastated the Liberian economy. It also outlines Paul Collier's argument about conflict traps and how Liberia serves as a perfect example of a country that has been caught in such a trap. The second section explores how conflict traps can be escaped and discusses the need for external intervention, particularly with international police contingents, for doing so. The third section describes the current United Nations international police force in Liberia, what it has already contributed to Liberian economic development and why it is essential if Liberia is to permanently escape its debilitating conflict trap.

2. Liberia's Conflict Trap

Liberia has been one of the most underperforming countries in Africa and is today considered not only underdeveloped but failed. Though there are many reasons for Liberia's failure, there is a strong argument to be made that conflict is most to blame. World Bank economist Paul Collier has explored how conflict

stunts development, especially in the poorest countries of the world. He describes a vicious cycle of poverty leading to conflict and conflict leading to more poverty which then leads to even more conflict. He calls this the "conflict trap" and argues that it can be triggered by civil wars, rebellions, and coups. Collier discovered that low income, low growth societies are the most likely to experience internal conflict and civil war. Once such a conflict begins, growth is retarded even further and conflict becomes even more likely in the future. Collier writes that "wars and coups keep low-income countries from growing and hence keep them dependent upon exports of primary commodities. Because they stay poor, stagnant, and dependent upon primary commodities they are prone to wars and coups. Wars and coups feed on themselves in other ways that make history repeat itself."[1]

There is perhaps no better example of a country caught in the conflict trap than that of Liberia. Conflict has been rife in Liberia since black settlers from the United States arrived in 1822 and then declared an independent republic in 1847. The attempt by these settlers to impose their authority over the indigenous population instantly lead to prolific and long-lasting political and military conflict. As Jeremy Levitt describes it,

> the Republic of Liberia's political and jurisdictional authority was limited, as indigenous nations…had no interest in becoming subjects of the settlers' nation-state, which they considered to be their competitor and enemy. Throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, indigenous Liberians, most notably the Gola, Bassa, and Kru, generally believed that the settlers should integrate with them rather than erect a hostile competitive nation. However, integration did not occur, and for the latter part of the nineteenth century, the majority of indigenous village-states remained legally, politically, economically, and militarily independent, as the republic did not possess the military capacity to conquer them or their territory.[2]

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1 Paul Collier, *The Bottom Billion: Why the Poorest Countries Are Failing and What Can Be Done About It*, (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2007), 37.

2 Jeremy I Levitt, *The Evolution of Deadly Conflict in Liberia: From 'Paternaltarianism' to State Collapse*, Durham, N.C.: (Carolina Academic Press, 2005)., 3.

From the arrival of the settlers in 1822 until 2003 when the United Nations sent its peacekeeping force to Liberia, there were 18 deadly conflicts in Liberia which Levitt records in a chart that is reproduced in Figure 1 below. While most of these conflicts did not reach the level of casualties typically used to define civil wars (at least 1,000 deaths with each side suffering at least five percent of these casualties[3]), they do demonstrate a cycle of violence that has been present in Liberia since even before its official founding. The most devastating of these conflicts were the *coup d'etat* in 1980, the Great War of 1989-97, and the second incarnation of the Great War lead by the LURD and MODEL insurrectionists in 1999-2003.

Figure 1. Liberian Conflicts[4]

Conflict	Years
Dei-British/Settler "Water Battle"	1822
Dei-Settler War	1822
Dei-Gola-Settler War	1832
Bassa-Settler War	1835
Kru-Settler "Fish" Conflict	1838
Vai-Settler Battles	1839-40
Bassa-Government War	1851-52
Kru-Government War	1855
Grebo-Maryland War	1856-57
Gedebo Reunited Kingdom Revolution	1875-76
Grebo-Government War	1893
Kru-Government Battles	1909
Grebo-Government War	1910
Kru-Government Conflict	1912
Kru-Confederacy-Government War	1915
Coup d'etat of the Tolbert Regime	1980
Great War	1989-97
The Great War continued: LURD and MODEL	1999-2003

From the end of the Kru-Confederacy-Government War in 1917 until the *coup d'etat* of 1980 the country enjoyed relative peace

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3 Collier, *The Bottom Billion*, 18.

4 Levitt, *The Evolution of Deadly Conflict in Liberia*, 6.

and stability as the Americo-Liberians were able to consolidate their control over the government. The government, however, developed as a paternalistic and exclusionary oligarchic democracy that provided for the maintenance of Americo-Liberian dominance and repressed indigenous groups.

By 1980, ethnic tensions and traditional animosities were beginning to bubble to the top of Liberian consciousness again. This tension was magnified by the incompetence and perceived corruption of President Tolbert and his regime. A decision to increase the tax on rice, the primary staple food in Liberia, and the invocation of a 150 year old law which prevented poor and landless Liberians from voting, resulted in wide-spread rioting and mass protests in Monrovia.

Samuel Doe, a Master Sergeant in the AFL (Armed Forces of Liberia) and an ethnic Krahn, capitalized on the discontent and lead a *coup d'etat* which successfully overthrew the Tolbert Presidency on April 12, 1980. During the *coup* President Tolbert was brutally murdered and the leader of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, and other high-ranking officials of the government were seized and imprisoned. However non-inclusive the previous oligarchic government had been, it had been much better than what was to come.

The government was immediately turned into a system of personal patronage to Samuel Doe. Author John-Peter Pham writes that immediately after the coup, "despite the wretched state of public finances, the new rulers raised military salaries by 150 percent and civil service salaries by 100 percent. In addition...between 1980 and 1983, the number of people drawing a government salary went from 18,000 to 56,000. Not surprisingly, the Liberian government's international debt increased from $750 million to over $1.4 billion during the same period."[5]

Doe also rewarded his ethnic brethren, the Krahn, and gave them favored positions in government beyond what their proportion of

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5 John-Peter Pham, L*iberia: Portrait of a Failed State*, (New York: Reed Press, 2004), p 81-82.

the population would normally dictate. Though constituting only five percent of the total Liberian population, within a few years of Doe coming to power they filled one-third of government positions and lead all four of the AFL's infantry battalions. Krahns also lead the Executive Mansion Guards and the Special Anti-Terrorist Unit.[6]

The new government was financially incompetent and the GDP suffered negative growth every year of Doe's presidency.[7] Any prospects of legitimate governance and economic development in Liberia died with President Tolbert in April 1980 and Samuel Doe's resultant assumption of power.

Collier argues that once a coup is carried out, further violence becomes more likely. This turned out to be the unfortunate case with Liberia. Doe's regime was first challenged by the NPFL (National Patriotic Front of Liberia) in 1989. The group was lead by Charles McArthur Taylor, who had once been a member of Doe's government until 1983 when he was accused of embezzling nearly a million dollars in government funds. He fled to the United States where he was imprisoned and held for fifteen months until he managed to escape in 1985. He then eventually made his way back to Liberia where he was able to play on the ethnic grievances of his fellow Gola and other tribal groups that had been excluded and repressed by Doe.

The insurrection lead by Taylor was a long and bloody one that did incalculable damage to the Liberian economy. Attempted intervention by regional groups, such as that of ECOMOG (Economic Community of West African States Cease-fire Monitoring Group) only seemed to add an additional party to the fighting. ECOMOG did, however, manage to arrange a short-lived truce in 1991 that allowed for the election of Amos Sawyer as President. The NPFL resumed hostilities in October 1992 and a long period of guerilla warfare followed. Taylor used revenues from the sale of timber, iron ore, diamonds, rubber and gold, which is estimated to have equaled around $250 million a year, to finance his rebellion.[8]

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6 Pham, Liberia:, 83.

7 Pham, Liberia:, 84.

8 Pham, Liberia:, 114.

A negotiated settlement was finally reached in 1997 and an election was held. Because people were afraid that the war would continue if Taylor was not elected, he won with a landslide victory of just over 75% of the vote. The vote was overseen by the UN and other outside groups and individuals, such as former U.S. President Jimmy Carter, to ensure its fairness and legitimacy. Even so, many Liberians remained unsatisfied with Taylor's continuation in power and the peace was a fragile one. In early 1999 a group calling itself Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD) launched attacks in northern Liberia from their base in Guinea. Another group, MODEL (Movement for Democracy in Liberia) composed of former Doe supporters, also rebelled against the Liberian government and Charles Taylor in particular.

After another six years of fighting, Charles Taylor resigned as President of Liberia on August 11, 2003 after being indicted for war crimes by the International Court of Justice for his involvement in atrocities in Sierra Leone and after strong pressure from U.S. President George W. Bush to step down. LURD and MODEL both signed a peace agreement on August 18 and the long civil war finally came to a conclusion, but only after it had resulted in hundreds of thousands killed, many more thousands of internally and externally displaced refugees, and almost complete economic melt-down. The Great War had made Liberia a failed state.

Paul Collier and fellow researchers at the World Bank make clear the exorbitant costs that conflict has on development. One of the primary costs is that of paying for the military forces themselves and then for the damage that they cause. "During a civil war a society diverts some of its resources from productive activities to destruction. This causes a double loss: the loss from what the resources were previously contributing and the loss from the damage that they now inflict."[9] Both of these costs obviously have a severe negative impact on economic growth and development. Instead of the average military expenditure among

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9 Collier, Paul, V.L. Elliott, Havard Hegre, Anke Hoeffler, Marta Reynal-Querol, and Nicholas Sambanis, *Breaking the Conflict Trap: Civil War and Development Policy, A World Bank Policy Research Report*, Washington, D.C.: The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/The World Bank, 2003., 13.

developing countries of 2.8% of GDP, states involved in civil conflict typically spend 5% of their GDP on the military, and this does not include the expenditures of the rebel groups. Over a seven-year period it is estimated that this level of growth in military expenditure causes an overall loss of 2 percent of GDP.[10]

The most obvious economic costs of conflict are seen in the destruction of infrastructure. A functional infrastructure is essential to economic growth. When this infrastructure is destroyed it disrupts trade, communication, and travel. Collier and his colleagues make particular mention of Liberia in this regard. "During the war in Liberia in the mid-1990s," they say, "all major infrastructures were damaged and looted. Monrovia, the largest port, suffered major damage during the first few months of the war, most of the electricity generating capacity of the Liberian Electricity Corporation was destroyed, and looting removed much of the distribution and transmission systems. Infrastructure," they conclude, "is an important determinant of economic growth and so destruction of infrastructure on such a scale is bound to reduce incomes."[11]

Figure #2: Key Economic Ratios and Long-Term Trends[12]

	1986	**1996**	**2005**	**2006**
GDP (US$ billions)	0.93	0.16	0.53	0.63
Gross Capital Formation/GDP	--	--	16.5	--
Exports of goods and services/GDP	50.1	--	38.0	27.8
Gross domestic savings/GDP	4.5	--	2.4	--
Gross national savings/GDP	--	--	39.9	--
Current account balance/GDP	--	--	-1.7	-11.6
Interest payments/GDP	1.6	0.2	0.0	--
Total debt/GDP	155.0	1,321.6	487.9	--

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10 Collier, et al, *Breaking the Conflict Trap*, 14.

11 Collier, et al, *Breaking the Conflict Trap*, 15.

12 World Bank, "Liberia at a Glance."

Though statistics during Liberia's war years are difficult to come by, some numbers provided by the World Bank, and reproduced in Figure 2, provide a partial picture of how badly conflict has damaged the Liberian economy. The dramatic decline in GDP from 1986 to 1996 is one of the most tangible demonstrations of the cost that the civil war has had on the national economy. Even by 2006, three years after the conflict had ended, the GDP was still nearly one-third less than it was twenty years earlier. In fact, Collier and his World Bank colleagues argue that the end of a conflict by no means indicates the end of economic decline. Instead, they argue that the "economic and health costs of conflict are not usually compensated by any postconflict improvements in economic policy, democratic institutions, or political freedom. On the contrary, all three usually deteriorate. The typical civil war starts a prolonged process of development in reverse."[13]

It is for this reason, the reverse development that post-civil war societies can face, that Collier and his colleagues argue that international intervention is essential. There is likely no other way to get such societies back on their feet and functioning properly. If left to fend for themselves without intervention, these countries will continue to suffer negative growth and therefore be even more likely to fall back into conflict – as Liberia has done throughout its bloody history.

3. Breaking the Conflict Trap

If it is recognized that the conflict trap is the primary cause of Liberia's underdevelopment and poverty problems then it must also be recognized that finding its way out of that trap will be essential to the country's future economic growth. The problem is that conflict traps are self-sustaining. Collier and his colleagues find that "once a country has had a civil war it is far more at risk of further war. This is partly because war leaves the society divided and embittered, and partly because war creates interests that favor continued violence and criminality."[14] In fact, their

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13 Collier, et al, *Breaking the Conflict Trap*, 12.

14 Collier, et al, *Breaking the Conflict Trap*, 22.

research indicates that there is a 44% chance that a country emerging from civil war will return to conflict within five years.[15]

Because of this high likelihood of renewed war, it is extremely difficult for states to escape a conflict trap without external assistance. Countries emerging from civil conflict are much more likely to remain on a peaceful path that is conducive to economic development if they are the recipients of outside intervention. Not just any type of intervention, however, will be effective. According to Collier's research, "in many postconflict environments neither aid, nor policy reform nor even new democratic political institutions can realistically secure peace during the first few years. External military intervention may be the only practical guarantor of peace."[16]

There are several reasons that external intervention is so important. One is that the maintenance of peace requires a robust military presence. Yet fielding such a sizable force is costly and has major budgetary repercussions which impact the country's ability to spend money on needed development initiatives. Maintaining a large army also reduces the labor force available to other sectors of the economy.[17] It has been demonstrated that high military spending reduces growth and reduced growth is precisely the opposite of what a post-conflict society needs.[18]

In addition to the economic costs of maintaining high levels of military spending, such spending has itself been found to actually *increase* rather than decrease the chances of reverting to war. Collier and his colleagues provide a possible reason for this. They argue that high levels of military spending "inadvertently signals that the government lacks confidence in the persistence of peace. An important post conflict problem is that neither side trusts the other, thus the more the government spends on the military, the more the rebel organization may think that it too has to prepare

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15 Collier, et al, *Breaking the Conflict Trap*, 83.

16 Collier, et al, *Breaking the Conflict Trap*, 10.

17 Collier, et al, *Breaking the Conflict Trap*, 161.

18 Collier, et al, *Breaking the Conflict Trap*, 86.

for the renewal of conflict. Such mutual military escalation can easily trigger incidents that re-ignite the conflict."[19]

Post-conflict societies find themselves in a position in which they require a robust military force to maintain peace but face the dilemma that by actually fielding such a force they will be retarding their own economic development and may actually fuel renewed conflict by unintentionally threatening opposition groups. The use of external forces avoids these problems. The presence of external forces reduces the financial costs of maintaining a large indigenous force thereby freeing up money for other essential budgetary concerns. External forces are also less likely to rouse the fear of opposition groups and may help put an end to the vicious cycles of militarization fueled by various competing groups.

The role of external military intervention in the extrication of countries from conflict traps is fairly well established in Collier's work. Conspicuously absent, however, has been discussion of the role of police officers in this task. While the military is indeed important, police officers often play an even more primary role in establishing internal stability, especially in democratically oriented societies. International police officers have much to offer in terms of helping countries escape from conflict traps and their potential value should not be underestimated.

Police officers are inherently less threatening than heavily armed military personnel. They are also likely to have more frequent interactions with common citizens and play a more visible role in society. Police officers often serve as the public face of government and the extent to which they are trusted by the population will have a major impact on that population's trust of the government as a whole. Public trust, in turn, is essential to the maintenance of the internal peace and stability necessary for economic development. Furthermore, police are also responsible for cracking down on corruption and stemming violent crime; two vital tasks in preventing resumptions of conflict. The international police officers assigned to UNMIL, the United Nations Mission in Liberia, have played a major role in helping Liberia

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19 Collier, et al, *Breaking the Conflict Trap*, 152.

escape its decades long conflict trap. The following section describes the make-up of the UNMIL police mission and details how police officers have been utilized to break Liberia's conflict trap and to provide the necessary societal conditions for economic development.

4. UNMIL

In October 2003 the United Nations Security Council passed resolution 1509 authorizing the establishment of UNMIL for a twelve-month period. Its mandate has been renewed every year since that time and its mission remains on-going. An election was organized and held in 2005 that culminated in the inauguration of Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, a Harvard educated Liberian who had previously worked for the World Bank, as the new President. President Johnson-Sirleaf vowed to rebuild Liberia into a functioning state and has taken numerous measures to spur economic development. One of her first priorities in this regard, and a top priority for UNMIL as well, has been to restore the Liberian National Police (LNP) to being a trusted, effective and professional policing organization.

All involved in the country's post-war development have recognized that an effective and impartial police department is a necessary first step for economic recovery in Liberia. The police are seen as essential to the maintenance of peace and in preventing a return to the conflict that so ravished the Liberian economy and society for most of its history. A report by the non-profit organization Refugees International, for example, argues that "progress on development in Liberia will not be sustainable if there is no rule of law."[20] Trusted police are important for both economic development and for democratic stability as John Mueller notes in an article published in the *Journal of Peace Research*. "Stable democracies," he writes, "almost by definition have effective policing forces."[21]

Policing is an especially important issue in Liberia because the LNP's reputation as an impartial police force was badly tarnished during the long years of conflict. Festus B. Aboagye and Alhaji

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20 Refugees International, 1.

21 Mueller, 511.

M.S. Bah note that "former President Taylor's first move when he came to power was to infuse the LNP with his loyalists, thereby compromising their neutrality and professionalism. In addition, the LNP was often accused of corrupt practices and human rights violations as its officers, with meager remunerations falling into arrears for many months on end, tried to make ends meet. Consequently, by the end of the civil war public confidence in the LNP was at its lowest."[22] Along the same lines, a UNMIL document notes that during the civil wars of the past "ordinary Liberians could not distinguish the gun-totting rebel combatants who killed, raped and maimed indiscriminately from the country's police personnel."[23]

Lack of trust in the police department is a serious problem, especially immediately following a civil war when stability is at its most fragile and the country is struggling to free itself from the conflict trap. If a democratic government is to take hold and if the peace and stability necessary for economic and social development are to survive, then a police force recognized as legitimate by the people it is meant to protect is essential.

Michael Kelly, an expert on international policing, makes the crucial point that:

> ...a common feature in the cause of conflict has been the insecurity felt or attacks endured by one particular ethnic, religious, or national group. This is often because the group has lost confidence in the administration of justice to secure their human rights, protect their cultural identity, and guarantee their physical safety. In these cases, or in the case of rebellion against an authoritarian regime, the problem has been that the mechanisms of 'justice' have been the instruments of repression in the first place. Addressing the issue of the administration of justice therefore goes to the

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22 Aboagye and Alhaji, 8.

23 Washington, J. Wesley, "Police Training Crosses Target," *UNMIL Focus*, Vol. 3, No. 4, June-August 2007, pp. 6-7, downloaded from:

http://unmil.org/documents/focus/unmilfocus12.pdf on 12/2/07.

heart of the conflict resolution objective of a peace operation.[24]

This has definitely been the case throughout Liberia's history. Each authoritarian regime that has come to power has rewarded members of its own ethnic group with positions in the LNP at the expense of other groups and has relied upon the police as a mechanism of political repression. A failure to break this trend would almost certainly result in renewed conflict and a consequent decline in economic development, making the intercession of an external and independent police force all the more necessary.

Liberia is also in special need of a functioning police force due to the high level of unemployment, especially among youths, and the extremely high crime rates. An explosion of crime is typical in post-civil war societies. Many of the rebels that were involved in the previous civil wars have no skills other than shooting guns and these young men pose a dangerous criminal threat to the country. Collier notes that the rate of homicides is higher in post-conflict countries[25] and Liberia has also had severe problems with other violent crimes such as armed robbery and rape.

As a report completed by the RAND corporation puts it, "Liberia faces a present danger of growing lawlessness and poor public safety, owing primarily to its large pool of jobless and unschooled youth, whose only experience is fighting. If public safety and the rule of law are not established and maintained, odds are all too good that more severe domestic threats will arise."[26] If criminal behavior goes unchecked, criminal gangs are likely to develop and to eventually evolve into full-fledged rebel groups. This would have the potential of leading right back into the type of civil conflict that Liberia has struggled for so long to escape. In addition to being key to ending conflict traps, the maintenance of law and order is essential to economic growth in other ways as well. Foreigners will not invest in Liberia if they do not believe

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24Michael J Kelly,., "Legitimacy and the Public Security Function," *Policing the New World Disorder: Peace Operations and Public Security,* Robert B. Oakley, Michael J. Dziedzic and Eliot M. Goldberg (eds.), Honolulu: University Press of the Pacific, 2002., 400.

25 Collier, *The Bottom Billion*, 34.

26 Gompert, et al, xiv.

that their assets will be protected. Likewise, Liberian businessmen will not be able to make a profit if they are vulnerable to vandalism, theft, or extortion. Lawlessness prevents economic development and economic development is necessary in preventing a backslide into conflict.

If Liberia is to escape the conflict trap it must overcome its legacy of police corruption and involvement in repression. This is necessary to increase the public's trust of government overall, to reduce criminality, to prevent the formation of large criminal groups that operate with impunity, and to lay the foundations needed for economic development. The obvious need for a totally rebuilt Liberian police force is what prompted UNMIL to add a strong contingent of international police officers to its peacekeeping mission.

As of August 2007 UNMIL had an authorized contingent of 14,875 military personnel and 1,240 police officers. These officers have been contributed to the mission by sixty-four countries around the world.[27] The UNMIL mission also has attached to it the first ever all-female Formed Police Unit comprised of 103 women police officers from India. It is hoped that the women will help recruit Liberian women into the LNP and that female officers will improve the investigation of rape cases, which remains one of the biggest criminal problems in Liberia. The primary mission of the UNMIL police force is to monitor and train the LNP. The officers also engage in joint-patrols, especially at night, and conduct riot-control operations. The only international police officers that are armed are those responsible for riot control, about 600 officers in total. The officers do not have full law-enforcement authority, but they do have the authority to detain people in conjunction with an LNP officer.

In its primary task of training police officers for the LNP, the UNMIL force has already passed its initial goal of 3,500 police officers, about 200 of which are women. The goal has since been increased to 6,000. About 300 officers have received specialized training in riot control and tactical operations. A functioning

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27 Nicholas Cook, "Liberia's Post-War Recovery: Key Issues and Developments," CRS Report for Congress, August 30, 2007, downloaded from:

http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL33185.pdf on 12/2/07., 4-5.

police academy has been developed, with a separate cafeteria and dorm-rooms for female recruits, that will enable more efficient and effective training in the future. Additionally, Liberia has decided to develop a Quick Reaction Unit within the LNP of about 500 officers. The members of the unit will have substantial firepower and they are meant to be half way between police and military units.   Their primary purpose will be to respond to fledgling insurgencies and other domestic disorders.

The work of both the UNMIL officers and the LNP officers that they have trained seems to be paying off. According to the Millennium Challenge Corporation's scorecard on Liberia, the rule of law in the country has improved. Compared to a median score of 0 for all African countries, Liberia scored -0.64 in 2004 in the rule of law category. The score remained the same in 2005 and then worsened in 2006 (-0.9). The 2007 score (-0.75) was an improvement over the 2006 score but was still worse than the original score in 2004. The worsened scores in these two years may reflect better reporting practices as the reporting system in 2004 was still very dysfunctional and there was little trust of police amongst the population.[28] It is possible that within a few years Liberia will be above the median and have a positive score in the area of rule of law.

There remain, however, serious challenges to the Liberian justice system. Despite the emphasis on training, professionalism is still sometimes a problem with the LNP. A prime example of this is an incident that occurred on July 8, 2007 between the LNP and the Liberian seaport police (LSP). LNP officers were attempting to investigate allegations of theft at the port, which the LSP thought was under its jurisdiction. The police director, Beatrice Munah Sieh, was apparently taken hostage by the LSP and the LNP attempted to arrest Ashfold Peal, the port's security chief. Nearly forty officers from both forces were hospitalized in the subsequent melee.[29] These types of incidents obviously impact the public's perception of the police and their ability to enforce the law in an impartial and professional manner. Clear lines of authority need to be established in order to prevent future jurisdictional confusions.

28 Millennium Challenge Corporation.

29 The Economist Intelligence Unit, 11-12.

Crime itself continues to be a problem. Armed robbery and rape still occur at extremely high frequencies despite multiple programs to reduce the incidence of these crimes. The increased emphasis on recruiting female officers will hopefully lead to better investigations of rape cases. The President has also launched two special operations "Operation Calm Down Fear," which has increased random security checks and patrols in Monrovia, and "Operation Sweeping Wave," which involves heightened day and night-time patrols and increased search activities, to help reduce all manner of crimes.[30]

Equipment procurement also remains a difficult challenge. In an August 2007 UN report to the Secretary-General it is noted that "although significant progress has been made in meeting the training benchmarks for the Liberian National Police, its operational effectiveness is constrained by the lack of adequate funding, vehicles, communication equipment, and accommodation."[31] As an example of the chronic under-funding experienced by the LNP the report points out that "in Grand Cape Mount County, where the police have only one vehicle and a motorbike for use by 42 officers, the county commander pays for the fuel and maintenance of the vehicle from his own salary. He also provides the fuel for a donated generator and food for detainees from his personal resources."[32] Fewer than half of police personnel have basic equipment available for their use.[33] Another challenge facing the rule of law in Liberia is beyond the control of the LNP or the civilian-policing element of UNMIL. This has to do with the weak judicial system and correctional system. The latest UN progress report notes that:
the development of the judicial and correctional systems has been very slow. The judicial system is constrained by limited infrastructure, shortage of qualified personnel, lack of capacity to process cases, poor management and lack of necessary will to institute reforms. As a result of these shortcomings, many Liberians have little confidence in the justice system.[34]

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30 United Nations Security Council, . 3.

31 United Nations Security Council, 16-17.

32 United Nations Security Council, 6.

33 Refugees International, 1.

34 United Nations Security Council, p9.

The justice system functions as a whole and whatever strides the LNP makes toward professionalism and effectiveness will be largely irrelevant if the rest of the system does not also improve. Reform in this sector must be comprehensive and include police, corrections officers, attorneys, and judges. Attorneys and judges are obviously the most difficult to reform since they require a great deal of training and education and because judgeships are often highly politicized. Even with these severe challenges, the UNMIL policing unit has accomplished quite a bit in a short period of time. They have exceeded their goal of training 3,500 LNP officers, they have established a working police academy, they have made concerted efforts to recruit women, and perhaps most importantly, they seem to have developed some respect with the civilian population. The Economist Intelligence Unit report on Liberia indicates that the new police force "is generally viewed by Liberians as a post-war success story" and that UNMIL "has given crucial support to the LNP."[35] These achievements have contributed substantially to maintaining the peace in Liberia and providing for the necessary environment for economic growth. So far UNMIL, and the police officers that have served in it, have prevented Liberia from falling back into the conflict trap.

5. Prospects for Liberia's Future Development

It is possible to be cautiously optimistic about the prospects for Liberia's future economic development. The latest UN progress report states that "Liberia's economy has begun to rebound. The growth rate, which was 5.3 per cent in 2005, has increased to 7.9 per cent in 2007. The gross domestic product (GDP) at current prices is estimated at US$ 574.5 million, with a per capita income of US$ 163."[36] This fast-paced growth rate is expected to rise even higher in 2008, up to 11%.[37] This rate of growth is quite an achievement for a country that has just emerged from a two-decades long civil war and long-term economic decline.

In 2004, Liberia only passed one of the fifteen indicators on the Millennium Challenge Corporation's scorecard, that of inflation. It

35 The Economist Intelligence Unit, 12.

36 United Nations Security Council, 11.

37 The Economic Intelligence Unit, 2.

failed in political rights, civil liberties, control of corruption, government effectiveness, rule of law, voice and accountability, immunization rates, health expenditures, primary education expenditures, primary education completion, economic regulatory control, credit rating, days necessary to start a business, trade policy and fiscal policy. In fiscal year 2009 Liberia is passing in eight categories, including political rights, civil liberties, voice and accountability, immunization rates, health expenditures, inflation, fiscal policy, and, perhaps most significantly, control of corruption.[38] In the categories that it does not yet pass, there have been strong improvements, especially in regards to the rule of law for which it scores a -.2 (much improved over the -.9 of 2006).

The International Monetary Fund's (IMF) conclusions about Liberia are also encouraging. They note that Liberia has performed satisfactorily under the IMF staff-monitored program of 2007 and that this has "supported a continued recovery in real GDP growth, relative price and exchange rate stability, and a significant improvement in public financial management and the financial position of the Central Bank of Liberia."[39]

Another positive indicator is the success in returning internally displaced people. By 2006, nearly all such people have returned to their homes. A report by the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre indicates that "more than 326,000 IDPs returned to their areas of origin and the 35 camps that had hosted them were officially closed in April 2006, formally marking the end of a 17-year period during which much of Liberia's population of three million had at some time been internally displaced."[40] Internal displacement increases poverty and impedes economic development; their resettlement is therefore a positive indicator for the future.

Despite these positive steps, however, Liberia is still not out of the woods. It typically takes a decade for a country to overcome the legacy of civil war and to escape the forces threatening to pull it back into conflict. Collier notes that "the typical postconflict

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38 Millennium Challenge Corporation.

39 International Monetary Fund, 1.

40 Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, p. 1.

country has little better than a fifty-fifty chance of making it through the first decade in peace. Indeed, about half of all civil wars are postconflict relapses."[41] If the gains that Liberia has already made are to continue and be made permanent then the international community must remain involved. A commitment of at least ten years should be made in order to ensure that Liberia has escaped the conflict trap for good.

6. Conclusion

UNMIL has made it possible for Liberia to move towards a stable peace and economic recovery. The policing element of the mission has been essential in that it has helped quell internal violence, returned legitimacy to the LNP, and provided the necessary foundation for economic development. In other words, the police officers of UNMIL have helped prevent Liberia from falling back into the conflict trap.

The stability provided by the UNMIL mission, and especially the policing element of the mission, has allowed for significant economic growth. This in turn reduces the likelihood of reversion to war in the future. As noted earlier, research suggests that the typical post-conflict country has a 44 percent chance of falling back into civil war over any given five-year period.[42] We also know that with each percentage point of economic growth this risk is reduced by one percent and with each percentage point of decline the risk is increased by one percent.[43] With annual growth rates of between seven to eleven percent, the risk of reversion to civil war has been reduced substantially since the UNMIL mission began. Liberia was totally devastated by its civil wars, however, and therefore is starting from the very bottom. Its position on the lowest rung of the development ladder makes the likelihood of additional conflict in Liberia higher than normal. Preventing this will require a long-term commitment from the international community.

This article has demonstrated that international policing units can make a substantial contribution to economic growth and

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41 Collier, *The Bottom Billion*,. 34.

42 Collier, et al, *Breaking the Conflict Trap*,. 83.

43 Collier, *The Bottom Billion*, 20.

development in post-conflict situations. In so far as these units help reduce the risks of the conflict trap they are contributing to economic development. Peaceful conditions and the rule of law are preconditions for a functioning economy and a reliable, trustworthy, and effective police force is a precondition for peaceful conditions and the rule of law. UNMIL has proven its usefulness in keeping Liberia out of the conflict trap. If that aid, however, were to be prematurely withdrawn then Liberia may once again fall into the trap. It is to be hoped that the international community's commitment to Liberia will stand firm. It is also to be hoped that the contribution international policing missions make to economic development and post-war recovery will be recognized and that these missions will become even more heavily relied upon in future post-conflict recovery missions.

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BOOK REVIEWS

Joan DeBardeleben (ed.), *The Boundaries of EU Enlargement – Finding a Place for Neighbours*, **Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2008; ISBN: 978-0-230-52124-7; 272 pages, index: 273-283**

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Written in the context of an enlarged and unquestionably rickety European Union and uncertainty about any further enlargement, *The Boundaries of EU Enlargement* essentially deals with issues regarding the remaining neighbours, aiming to explore current EU-neighbour arrangements, their strengths, shortcomings and challenges. On the one hand, the book is an account and multi-faceted critique of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP). On the other hand, and less explicitly so, it brings into discussion the possibility, even necessity of a partial revision of what the EU should, or can, be, both internally and externally. It is a rich and enjoyable read for anyone with an interest in these issues.

As part of a genuinely questioning introduction, Joan DeBardeleben introduces some of the basic issues. One is the inherent dilemma of the ENP, a value-based policy that rests on the same principles of conditionality as the process towards full membership, but without the reward of actual membership. Another is the fact that the EU is tired and desperately needs something like the ENP as the next best thing to letting everyone in. The chapters themselves further discuss and illustrate issues relating to the questionable nature of specific neighbourhood relations. The conclusion, also written by DeBardeleben, is equally inquisitive and open-minded as the introduction, suggests fundamental weaknesses in the EU's approach to its neighbours, and comfortingly implies that a massive experiment like the EU takes time to perfect.

The first two chapters expand on the critique of the ENP, though in different ways. The author of the first chapter, using constructivist theory, builds his argument around the so-called

"logic of appropriateness" that underlies the force of enlargement, implying that, once a non-member has become "good enough" for membership in theory, it would be illogical and contradictory to the very meaning of the EU to refuse it entry. The author of chapter 2 implicitly criticises the ENP by comparing it to the region-specific policy NDI (Northern Dimension Initiative), which navigates the relationship between northern Europe and Russia and is built on an interest-based rationalist approach rather than a value-based one. Though it remains unclear if the author would suggest that the ENP be more like the NDI, this rationalist approach both puts the ENP and the very meaning, scope and uniformity of European integration into question.

The remaining chapters are divided into region-specific sections, dealing with Russia, Ukraine and Moldova, and the Balkans, all of which are thorough and informative in regards to relations with the EU. The focus of the different sections is notably different and perfectly appropriate given that the relationship the EU is has with each neighbour is thoroughly unique. The different sections also seem to, perhaps inadvertently, embody different arguments of the discussion. Theoretically, the section on Russia denounces the ENP from a rationalist and realist angle, whereas the chapters on Ukraine seem to do so from an opposite viewpoint. The section on Russia defends Russia's preference to be a so-called 'strategic partner' to the EU, rather than falling under the ENP, and advocates a flexible EU approach in attempting to plant its values in Russian soil: "while it seems unlikely that European leaders and institutions will forego comment on Russia's 'value' choices, if these judgments do not lead to concrete sanctions or disincentives, they may be only minimal obstacles to continued EU-Russia engagement, while still gradually and subtly affecting the Russian political environment" (p. 87).

On the other hand, the first chapter on Ukraine thoroughly accounts for what can only be seen as a Ukrainian failure to live up to the standards of potential membership, but still conclu the chapter by pointing out the inadequacies of the ENP. This way, the chapter seems to suggest that the failure is actually the EU's, in that it has not managed to find a way to appropriately reward a neighbour that, after all, is trying and desperately wants to join.

The chapter on Moldova is, again, altogether different and suggests the possibility of an interest-based relationship: "the EU should view developments in Moldova and the Baltic Sea Region with a strong dash of realism, cognizant of the fact that Moldova, which is still an illiberal democracy, continues to pursue a policy of balance of power politics on astute calculations as to where its national interest lie between Europe and Russia". (195)

The level of inquisitiveness, as well as the degree of overall inconclusiveness of the book is in a way appropriate, given that the EU's approach to its neighbours and potential further enlargement is anything but clear. There is, however, something frustrating about the level of detachment between the different sections, the general introduction and conclusion included. There are numerous arguments, suggestions and conclusions throughout the book, and of course they can not all be wrapped up or pitted against each other. However, the book does fundamentally put into question the nature of EU-neighbour relations, but without any overall arguments. It is somehow unclear whether the book realises that it contains solid material for a comparative and more conclusive discussion on neighbourhood relations in the very real and very different examples of Russia, Ukraine and Moldova.

For the same reasons, the chapters on the Balkans, which, after all, are on a path towards membership, seem slightly out of place. Focusing almost entirely on factual accounts of the EU's security achievements in the region, they add little to a debate about EU-neighbour relations. Read in this light, a section on Turkey would perhaps have been more relevant.

However, there are many ways of a reading a book and it may be unfair to suggest that this one misses a point it was not even trying to make. Quite in line with what the aim of the book seems to be, it manages to present a debate-provoking and intelligent account of the current state of the EU and its neighbours as part of broader questions regarding the very role, character, depth and scope of the Union. The critique that contains unrealised potential is an almost flattering criticism and may provide incentive for readers to embark on further study.

Howard J. Wiarda (with the assistance of Dale R. Herspring and Esther M. Skelley), 2006, *Development on the Periphery: Democratic Transitions in Southern and Eastern Europe*, Lanham, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield, 269 pp. ISBN: 0742530345 pbk.

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The comparative research of democratization in Southern and Eastern Europe has preoccupied scholars of transitology and consolidology since the collapse of communism in 1989. "Development on the periphery" is a part of the series of books edited and written by Howard J. Wiarda on Latin American, South and East European, and comparative politics. The volume is a monograph, based on a number of the author's previous publications and articles (in *East European Political and Society* and *Mediterranean Quarterly*), except for the chapter on East European political culture, contributed by Dale R. Herspring. It can be recommended to students of regime change in Southern and/or Eastern Europe. The informationally rich narration and profound analysis of political history of both regions (in the case of Eastern Europe, with focus on the twentieth century) are especially valuable for the students of history and politics of the regions.

The focus of the book is on political-cultural aspects of regime change in two traditionally undemocratic and underdeveloped regions of Europe, Southern and Eastern, and their prospects for consolidation of democracy and European integration. This topic is especially relevant in light of the democratic backsliding in new EU member states, faltering democratization in Moldova and Ukraine and reversion towards authoritarianism in Belarus and the Russian Federation. The theoretical argument of the book (developed in Chapter 3 *Transitology and the Need for New Theory*) is that transitology and consolidology, theories initially developed for analysis of Southern European and Latin American regime change, are "fundamentally flawed" and incomplete (p. 80), as well as non-applicable to East and Central Europe. The latter is due to the region's principally different historical

experience of political regimes and to the significance of political culture, although varying greatly from country to country. The book recedes from either a purely rationalist or institutionalist approach. Instead, historical approach is applied to provide a structural explanation of prospects of democratization, with political culture as one of the main explanatory variables. The book provides in-depth case studies of two South European countries (Spain and Portugal) and an overview of the East European region as a whole, rather than a coherent comparative study.

On the basis of voluminous historic evidence, it is successfully explained why Southern Europe had better conditions for a successful transition from authoritarianism than East European countries from communism. In line with structural theory of democratization (societal modernization and comparative historical approach), the level of transformation within the previous regime (e.g., prior to the death of Franco in Spain and a military *coup d'etat* in Portugal; or "reform communism" in Hungary) is considered as determinative for the outcome of transition from authoritarianism. In contrast to Southern Europe, where the comprehensive bottom-up changes had begun long before the end of authoritarian regimes, not only did top-down changes in political culture start with the collapse of the regime in Eastern Europe, they were also rather shallow. The lack of the "civic" political culture necessary for a democracy and basic societal attitudes internalized under communism have dominated transition and obscured prospects for democratization in Eastern Europe, despite the implemented institutional changes. The argument that membership in the Soviet Union complicates transition towards democracy in comparison to post-communist East European states belongs here as well. Although criteria for complete transition are not fully defined except for general reference to "continuity with a previous regime" (p. 97), implying that transitions are never over, transitions in both Eastern and Southern Europe are classified as incomplete.

Undoubtedly, bringing back political culture along with historical and geographic factors definitely contributes to the understanding of democratization in both regions. However, it largely ignores elite contestation and institutional configuration, a subject of

contextual theories of democratization, and other variables of regime change, e.g. mode of transition, studied by transitology, which are particularly important for analysis of post-communist transitions. Moreover, where complementary structural explanatory factors influencing transition, such as a level of economic development and institutionalization (for study of the East European case) are introduced, the causal relations between all main explanatory factors seem rather intricate.

Furthermore, the conceptualization of notions such as political culture (including religion, previous experience of polity/regime, and psychological attitudes) in Central and Eastern Europe, important precisely because of the book's focus on historical legacies and cultural divisions, should be addressed. Political culture is defined rather broadly,[44] up to merging with a general notion of culture, and is interchangeably referred to as "participatory" or "civic", indicating a problem of conceptual stretching and vagueness. Given the complex nature and broad definition of the concept, the political culture, although considered the main explanatory factor for prospects of regime change, sometimes is analyzed as conditioned by economic, institutional, societal changes or the nature of the regime (authoritarian versus totalitarian).

Likewise, the presentation of some constituents of political culture is disputable. For instance, a substantial constituent of the complex notion of political culture is the factor of religion. In the book the overarching concept (Christianity as a whole) is identified with its Western (Roman Catholic and Protestant) branches, whereas the Eastern (Orthodox) branch is seen rather as an alternative to Christianity than apart of it. Although religious division is one of the most fundamental identifiers of political culture and geopolitical orientation of the state (e.g., Samuel Huntigton's "clash of civilizations"), it however stands for either Western or Eastern Christianity but not Europeanness per se. The next dimension for distinguishability between West and East of Europe, namely belonging to an empire, is even more blurred. All monarchies to which Eastern European countries (Belarus, Moldova, Western Ukraine) belonged, such as Polish-

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44 "...the values, ideas, norms, belief systems (including religious beliefs), behavioural patterns, and standards ways by which people operate" (Wiarda 2006: 9).

Lithuanian and Austro-Hungarian, monarchy, identified themselves with the West and Western Christendom.

Finally, although the importance of differences between countries is stressed, their understanding is blurred by analysis of Eastern Europe as a whole (contrary to country-specific studies of Southern Europe) and by the Russian Federation-centered view. Besides, Eastern Europe and FSU, CIS, and the Russian Federation are often interpreted as three different entities. This leads to the second crucial and problematic concept - that of Europe (and its borders). It has turned out difficult to define primarily because of its multiversion essence allowing for plurality of criteria, e.g. "geography, religion, culture, politics, economics, sociology, or ethnicity" (p. 182) according to which it can be defined. As observed with regard to the religious factor, the notion of "Europeanness" seems problematic to define. Occasionally, it is either substituted for with level of development or equated to Western Europe. The delimitation of belonging to Europe is not consistent and occasionally excludes either Easterners (Belarussians, Georgians, Russians, and Ukrainians) and Southern nations (the Balkans).

Regarding the overall structure of the book, the presentation of information on Southern and Eastern Europe is asymmetric. In the former case, the very detailed political history of each country is outlined back to pre-nation state times; by this, two case-studies of Spain and Portugal niche foreign policies towards their colonies, undertaken in Chapter 6, although informative and analytical, seem to be not coherent with the main argumentation of the book. In contrast, for Eastern Europe rather little attention is paid to the pre-communist period.

The general aim of the book is largely achieved since it reveals the significance of political culture for studies of regime change. Yet inclusion of other factors, e.g. institutions and modes of transition, could provide a more overall analysis.

Andreas Menn, *Konstruktion von Nation und Staat in Osteuropa: Transnistrien und die Republik Moldau [Construction of nation and state in Eastern Europe: Transnistria and the Republic of Moldova]*, **Saarbrücken, Vdm Verlag Dr. Müller, 2008, ISBN 3836459221 (pbk), 112 pp**

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The recent events in Georgia and the repercussions thereof in world politics have shifted attention to Russia and its near abroad where several cases of unstable states and separatist conflicts were created by the break-up of the Soviet Union. Right at the border of the recently enlarged European Union is the case of Moldova and the self-declared Transnistrian Moldavian Republic that lies within Moldova's internationally recognised boundaries. Both the internationally recognised state and the *de facto* independent Transnistria are rather new constructs in terms of nation-building and state-building and their mere existence continues to surprise many analysts and decision makers.

Andreas Menn's *Konstruktion von Nation und Staat in Osteuropa: Transnistrien und die Republik Moldau* sets out to trace the construction of the two entities of Moldova and Transnistria throughout history and it does just that. After justifying the need for his research and clearing up the most important terminology, he summarises both Western and Eastern European approaches to explaining nation-building and nationalism. He then opts to employ a synergy of them, or rather to use different theories to explain different aspects of the nation- and state-building in Moldova and Transnistria. Through combining other author's insights into one thorough historical study, critically analysed through various theoretical lenses, Menn sheds some light on the complex cases of Moldova and Transnistria:

Both Moldova proper and Transnistria are ethnically heterogeneous and with a history of foreign rule by diverse empires and states. The question of a Moldovan nation has only seriously been posed in the last hundred years and the concept of a Transnistrian nation is an invention of the early 1990s. Both,

therefore, missed the earlier waves of nationalism which created nation-states such as Germany, France or Poland. As Menn correctly notes, this was due to a late completion of the prerequisites for national identity formation – communication and social mobility – set out in the modernisation-based school of thought (p.91).

All of Moldova and Transnistria were part of the Russian empire. Western Moldova (Bessarabia) declared independence in 1918, but then allowed itself to be absorbed by Romania (p. 36). Transnistria had never been part of historic Moldova, but rather belonged to Ukraine. Mere political calculation by Moscow brought the two together under Soviet rule when Moscow decided to carve out a separate Moldovan Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic (MASSR) from Ukrainian territory, including present-day Transnistria in order to reclaim "the rest" of Moldova from Romania. When Romania lost Bessarabia in the Second World War, Moscow integrated it with the Transnistrian portion of the MASSR to form the Moldovan Soviet Socialist Republic (MSSR).

In both the MASSR and the MSSR the Soviet Union chose to artificially exaggerate the differences between Moldovans and Romanians in terms of language, culture and history in order to prevent future Romanian claims of the territory. This ran contrary to Soviet nationality policies elsewhere, as local identities were usually suppressed rather than encouraged. However, Moscow was never fully committed to the project of the Moldovan nation which was thus encouraged and suppressed at different times or even simultaneously. Adding the parallel creation of the supranational *homo sovieticus* and the *de facto* preference of Russian elites to this equation, it is no wonder that many Moldovans until today wonder where they belong and who they are.

During *perestroika* and the break-up of the Soviet Union the Moldovan Popular front, assisted by modern communications and media and a now much better educated public, managed to reach a temporary consensus, mostly in Bessarabia, that lead to the declaration of independence. Transnistria, fearing the loss of its traditional dominance and a reunification of Moldova with Romania, also declared independence, heavily relying on Russian

support for its cause in the resulting conflict with Moldova proper. The expected reunification, however, never came despite Romanian efforts in that direction and the debate between "Moldovanists" and "Romanianists" continues ever since.

In both Moldova and Transnistria the processes of state-building and nation-building are running in parallel (p. 90), though there are specific peculiarities to each case. Menn correctly identifies present-day Moldova as a polyethnic state where both ethnicity and citizenship count rather than a traditional nation-state. In Transnistria, however, a separate identity based mainly on citizenship of a constructed common regional homeland has come into being and the leadership has arguably been somewhat more successful at nation-building (p. 81).

At the end of his book, Menn concludes that everything is still possible in Moldova and Transnistria, as the identities that are forming there are not yet fixed. A key factor will of course be Russia, who can either escalate the Transnistria conflict like in the Georgian case or allow for a reintegration of Transnistria into Moldova which would then lead to another phase of joint nation- and state-building.

The reviewer shares Menn's opinion that there is much scope for further research into Moldovan and Transnistrian statehood and the Transnistria conflict. A fuller understanding of the realities in Russia's near abroad can only help Western decision makers to make well informed decisions and avoid another Cold War. Menn's book, however, already represents an excellent starting point for those wishing to understand the history of the creation of present Moldova and Transnistria.

Unfortunate is the relatively high price of this publication, which might limit its reach to those most devoted to the subject who tend to already have a relatively good understanding of the issues covered by Menn. Hopefully, however, the book will be read widely enough in decision-making circles which are often dominated by generalisations and false assumptions about Moldova and Transnistria.

Joerg Forbig and Pavol Demes (eds.), *Reclaiming Democracy: Civil Society and Electoral Change in Central and Eastern Europe,* **The German Marshall Fund of the United States and Individual Authors, 2007, ISBN 978-80-969639-0-4, 254 pp.**

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Forbig and Demes' detailed ethnographic analysis of the political transformation of post--communist Central and Eastern Europe is presented in their 2007 work, *'Reclaiming Democracy- Civil Society and Electoral Change in Central and Eastern Europe.'* The authors dedicate themselves to providing a detailed account and analysis of civil society's role in bringing about democratic change in Georgia, Serbia the Ukraine and Slovakia since the early 1990's. Taking examples from the particular experience of civil society groups within these countries, Forbig and Demes provide the reader a variety of debates and perspectives which have often been over looked in other more general studies on the Central and Eastern European (CEE) and the transition from authoritarianism to democracy, which, as the authors indicate, is still ongoing. The book is presented in two parts, the first is a case study series and the second a comparative exploration of the key themes outlined in the preface and introductory sections.

In part one, the authors provide a panoramic case-orientated study series to the reader which, from key activists, provides a unique and intimate view of civil society activities and efforts, pre-election campaigns and civic movements, which emerged in the analyzed countries in this collaborative work. Through the use of case studies based on actual experience rather than second-party narrative the authors achieve what they purport to achieve, producing work with an emphasis on authenticity rather than relying exclusively on scholarly analysis. The authors introduce a wide variety of case studies which facilitate their debate in Part two's comparative analysis, which contends with the misconception that a 'universal recipe exists for civil society efforts to assert democracy' (p.14). Concentrating on moving away from explicitly narrating the colour and velvet revolutions of the time, the case studies focus on tenants of democratic change

influenced by the civil society, such as free and fair elections, preparation 'on the ground'(p.40), and particular nuances of the Rose revolution in Georgia and the Orange revolution in the Ukraine. As stated by the authors, the particular nuances highlighted, often remain hidden behind broader categories that have been applied to recent democratic change in CEE (p. 17).

Part two's comparative approach places the observations made in part one into a broader political perspective. A broader perspective enables the reader to analyze the situation during this time of political transformation and place it in a wider international context. Furthermore it re-emphasizes that the introduction of democratic electoral reform at no point guarantees a model which can be used as a universally applicable standard for all post-communist countries. Part two's international perspective goes beyond the confines of CEE and considers 'different authoritarianisms' from China, Belarus, Russia and Eurasia and highlights that civil society movements without credible leadership in opposition to the status-quo are essentially powerless (p.160). Challenging the views that have become popular during the revolutions, the chapters analyzing patterns of electoral change, strategy, resources, youth culture involvement, the economy and direction, the authors reflect on the real effect of color and velvet revolutions and the difficultly in determining causal links between and the prime motivators of a transition to democracy (p. 18). The main emphasis in each chapter is that electoral revolution is not the only possible mode of regime change and that pluralism both socially and politically are the main supporting components conducive to electoral change. Fundamentally, the reader is shown, as a result of Forbig and Demes' thorough analysis that civil society or evolution in cultural norms cannot be understood so rigidly as to expect them to bring about electoral change and 'reclaim' democracy.

Forbig and Demes put forth a well structured and thematically sound piece of work. The reader is guided through debates which are clear, concise and original. Furthermore, the work provides a wider choice of examples than is typically found in texts dealing with transitional democracy in CEE. Methodologically, the use of both case study and comparative technique is a classical approach which champions the merits of ethnographic

scholarship. Stylistically the book is well written and where definition and further explanation is required the reader is provided with such in a clear, concise and informative manner. The language used is stimulating and the reader is not overwhelmed by the use of jargon or long convoluted sentences, quotations are choice and thematic. Critically however, it should be mentioned that in order to fully appreciate part two's comparative analysis, the reader should be equipped with a prior knowledge of the political and social cleavages in the cases used as models such as China, Russia and Eurasia. While these case studies are well researched, presented, and debated, the merits of their inclusion may be overlooked and under-appreciated by students who are unfamiliar with these cases.

R*eclaiming Democracy* is an insightful and original approach to the consideration of civil society and its relationship with electoral change in CEE. This book would be of particular relevance to scholars and students of CEE history and politics as it looks beyond the traditional headings and assumptions about the actual contributory force of civil society.

Stuart J. Kaufman, *Modern Hatreds the Symbolic Politics of Ethnic War*, Cornell University Press, United States of America, 2001, 262 pp. ISBN: 0-8014-8736-6

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In the last century, ethnic conflicts have escalated in number and intensity all around the globe. Hence, understanding the violent fragmentation of peaceful coexistence in multi-ethnic states has become of paramount importance to addressing some of the crucial international security issues of our time. Outlining the preconditions of ethno-nationalist clashes, argues Stuart J. Kaufman in his book "Modern Hatred", is nowadays one of the best means to explain the organized expulsions, massive rape, torture, fratricidal murder and horrifying massacres that have characterized contemporary ethnic wars. What makes such ethno-national warring schemes possible? Can it simply be the

perpetrating nations' method of re-asserting their "rightful" place within nationhood? (Kaufman 2001, 2).

Aiming to develop a theory to decipher "why ethnic wars occur and how they might be prevented" (p.2), Kaufman analyzes the motives national leaders possess to instigate ethno-nationalist impulses on their population. What is more, he seeks to explain why supporters of national causes might be willing to perpetrate some of the most savage methods of ethnic confrontation and even to die for such cause.

Literature on ethnic wars is quite extensive. Therefore, efforts to understand and explain why ethnic wars have only occurred in certain territories and among particular groups of peoples are not new. Early attempts, however, mainly assumed primordialist axioms which interpreted ethnic conflicts as the consequence of innate mutual hostility amongst ethnic groups. This approach is mainly based upon "assign-at-birth" ancient hatreds credentials.

Conversely, scholars who refute the essentialist thesis focus their studies on a rather instrumental or rational basis. In the past few decades, nevertheless, constructivist approaches have been gaining greater momentum and have been able to provide innovative answers to old ethnic questions. Kaufman's integrative approach provides thus an excellent understanding of modern ethnic wars as it combines the arguments of psychological and rational choice mainstreams of though (pp. 17-47).

Kaufman's book cleverly reveals how ethnic myths and fears, as well as the opportunity to act on them, politically become the interlinked preconditions that set the context for ethnic wars (pp.10-12). The author uses the theory of symbolic politics in a case study that mainly draws its examples from the Caucasus region and Southeast Europe. To understand the symbolic politics theory one must assume that "*people choose by responding to the most emotionally potent symbols evoked… symbols get their meaning from emotionally laden myths. Myths* […] *have the role of giving events and actions a particular meaning – typically by defining enemies and heroes and tying ideas of right and wrong to people's identity. Facts, from this point of view, do not matter*

– either they are redundant confirming the myth; or else they contradict it and are rejected (pg.28).

In this vein of thought, to predict whether people will engage or not in ethnic violence one must first examine the myths and prejudices which determine the particular symbols that are likely to move a given nation for they evoke their greatest collective fears (pg.30). For example, fear of national extinction.

The result of Kaufman's study is a historically detailed and vastly documented book which thoroughly analyzes ethnic disputes. Firstly, the Armenian-Azerbaijani clash in Karabagh which is, according to Kaufman, the outcome of clashes between an Armenian nation obsessed with its history of genocide, and the Azerbaijani people who were mobilized by emotive slogans in the sort of "Freedom for the heroes of Sumgait" (pp.80-83, 205). Secondly, the conflict in Abkhazia, which is explained as the byproduct of cleavages between Georgian chauvinist leaders (e.g. Gamsakhurdia) and the stubbornness of Abkhaz nationalists determined to renew a century-old statehood (pp. 124-127). Thirdly, the case of Moldova, which the study revels was a mass-led process that in the end was manipulated by elites until the outbreak of war (p.205). Lastly, the secession wars in Yugoslavia are approached as an elite-led process which was only possible due to the presence of long-lasting myths that revived the past and gave legitimacy to ethnic confrontation (p. 205).

The book's added value comes from its great variety of sources (including visits to the regions and dozens of personal interviews). The author is thus easily able to indicate why diplomacy and economic incentives are not powerful enough means to neither prevent nor end ethnic wars. According to Kaufman, the best conflict resolution strategy is peace-building, as it is the only means that focuses on vanishing hostile attitudes at both the elite and the grassroots levels (p.42).

The main findings of the book show that there was a pattern of pre-existing myths and fears of group extinction, ethnic hostilities and a drive for political dominance in all cases. Moreover, successful politicians were always the ones who were able to refer to myths and fear with the explicit purpose of triggering their

followers' emotions. Also, it seems that his integrative approach had to be introduced in the study of ethnic violence as essentialist, instrumentalist, and rational-choice views were by themselves failing to take into account the meanings of the people's actions.

There are two main pitfalls, nevertheless, to the symbolic politics theory. First, that it limits itself to interpret ethnicity as regards to symbolic complexes which drive groups to claim a group name, a set of common believes, a shared culture and a common historical memory and decent. The latter is based only on one interpretation of ethnicity. Authors such as Anthony Smith (Nationalism, 2001) debate several other interpretations like, for example, the modernist construction of ethnic identity.

The second limitation is that Kaufman's arguments fail to analyze the impact of ethnicity construction after regime change. The construction of ethnic identity is, according to scholars like Scholte (2005), a hybridized construction of self which in contemporary times is built upon new dynamics of supra-territorial interactions and trans-global connectivity. This means that modernist constructions of identity in the territories of political transition have also to be taken into account as they alter the values of myths and symbols.

In a nutshell, "Modern Hatreds" is an excellent piece of scholarship as it offers international relations and political science majors an integrative approach to understanding the pros and cons of the most common arguments that aim to explain ethnic wars. The author moreover presents a balanced blend of theory and case studies which provide the readers with the necessary examples to identify what triggers ethnic conflicts.

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