



Democracy & Society

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Contemporary Civil Society: Opportunities and Obstacles

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Thinking Ahead: Four Questions for NGOs to Ponder

BY MICHAEL EDWARDS

This piece was written for the Canadian Council for International Cooperation (CCIC), May 28th, 2013. It has been excerpted for publication in *Democracy and Society*.

Executive Summary

Someone once said that the only predictions that come true are those that aren't predictions – a reference to the difficulty of knowing what's going to happen in the future by extrapolating from the present. I've been working for, observing and writing about NGOs in the international arena for more than 30

years, yet I'd be hard-pressed to forecast the next stage of their journey with any certainty, partly because NGOs are so diverse. Still, certainty is not essential for a productive conversation, and I can think of at least four inter-related questions relevant to every NGO that require a thoughtful and considered response.

First, what is happening to foreign aid, and how will NGOs be affected by these changes in the future? Aid is not going to disappear in the next 25 years, but its focus may shift from poverty-reduction to global co-operation around social, economic and [Cont'd, Page 19]

International Democracy Support Under Pressure

BY THOMAS CAROTHERS AND SASKIA BRECHENMACHER

International democracy support faces a widening pushback by governments around the world. This pushback is not new. Ten years ago, a growing number of governments began cracking down on Western democracy building efforts within their borders, putting an end to two decades of rapid expansion of such programs. Russian president Vladimir Putin was the most visible face of this new trend but various other leaders in Africa, Latin America, and Asia soon followed the Russian example.

At the time, the pushback appeared to be the result of two specific developments: the fear of foreign political med-

dling triggered by Western support for the color revolutions in Georgia and Ukraine together with President George W. Bush's use of democracy promotion as a way to frame the U.S.-led intervention in Iraq and the new U.S. war on terrorism more broadly. Many Western aid providers hoped that with a change of U.S. presidents and movement away from democracy-branded military intervention, the turbulent waters of international democracy support would calm and the pushback would ease.

Yet almost five years down the road from the arrival of a U.S. president who foreswore regime [Cont'd, Page 2]

CIVIL SOCIETY IN THE 21st CENTURY

• *A Letter from the Director* •



Civil society has long been considered an important yet contested feature of democracy and democratic transitions. Today, nearly forty years since the beginning of the Third Wave, we ask how our understanding of civil society has evolved and what new challenges civil society faces? Technological change and globalization has reshaped the context and scope of civic action, blurring the line between the global and the domestic as well as between civil society and more broadly conceived social movements. Likewise, civil society's contribution to democratic consolidation and better governance faces new challenges in the 21st century from remnants of authoritarian states and in the context of hybrid regimes.

Two of our submissions provide a needed bird's eye view of the current state of Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs). Thomas Carothers and Saskia Brechenmacher argue that concurrent with the slowdown in the global spread of democracy we have witnessed a broad pushback against democracy and governance NGOs. This has forced such NGOs to adapt in interesting ways, for instance, by moving "off shore" to neighboring countries. On the other hand Michael Edwards, in an excerpt from recent work, encourages readers to rethink the role of civil society in development aid given a changing global landscape. He asks, how can we meet the pressing development challenges of the 21st century in a world of rapidly developing countries and growing income inequality? How can NGOs build bridges between citizens, businesses, and governments in the provision of better governance and public goods?

Several of our contributors provide us with insights into the experience of civil society in individual countries. Prof. van het Hof of Akdeniz University analyzes the Gezi Park protests in Turkey as indicative of a need for greater civil society development in a semi-democracy and a potential wakeup call for the governing AK Party. Pablo Estrada looks at civil society's role in policy formation within the context of personal security law and a post-authoritarian state in Mexico. Finally, Emily Kehrt takes us to Lukashenko's Belarus - an electoral authoritarian regime where despite nominally competitive elections, civil society faces one of the most repressive environments today.

We are also sharing two articles that discuss civil society organizations within the context of social movements. Eric Chenoweth looks back at Solidarity as primarily a trade union, and asks whether it is useful to use the Polish example

as a model for encouraging democratic transition elsewhere. Meaghan Stuessy argues that the Tea Party phenomenon is simultaneously indicative of a social movement but also a fairly narrow civil society organization, with seemingly disproportionate influence over American politics.

This is also an opportunity to highlight some changes at D&S and CDACS. Earlier this year former director Barak Hoffman left his position after six years. We are extremely grateful for his dedication to the program and wish him all the best on his new endeavors. We also welcome a new editorial team to D&S led by Katherine Krueger, and with the assistance of Matthew Mainuli and Ugur Altundal. They have worked diligently to make this edition possible and have also expanded the reach of the journal. You can now find additional articles, as well as excellent papers from Heba El-Shazli's graduate class, *Civil Society in Transitioning and Emerging Democracies* on-line (abstracts shared here). We hope you visit us at www.democracyandsociety.com.

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CAROTHERS AND BRECHENMACHER, *Continued from Page 1*

change policies, the pushback has not yet ebbed, but in fact has continued to grow. Numerous governments are vilifying external democracy and rights support, harassing or expelling international aid groups, and taking steps to restrict external funding to domestic NGOs. Pushback is also hitting aid organizations from a wider range of countries, suggesting that it is more than a manifestation of anti-American sentiments. This phenomenon has serious consequences for democracy-related NGOs in recipient countries, which are often heavily dependent on external support. It also represents a serious challenge for Western policymakers and aid providers, as financial, technical and logistical training and assistance on democracy issues with both governments and civil society is a key tool in the overall effort to bolster democracy and human rights around the world.

Despite its increasing scale and significant implications, the pushback phenomenon remains poorly understood. Too often, policymakers focus on the actions of specific leaders or incidents such as President Putin in Russia or the recent crackdown on NGO workers in Egypt, without taking into account the overall breadth of the phenomenon. Restrictive measures are often conceptualized as temporary setbacks rather than as symptoms of a widening trend. This inadequate common understanding weakens international responses, which have often proven tentative and toothless. Addressing the pushback phenomenon effectively requires a nuanced understanding of its full scope as well as its underlying causes.

Scope

Since the middle of the last decade, dozens of governments in Asia, Africa, Latin America, the Middle East, and the former Soviet Union have limited the space in their countries for external assistance aimed at supporting democracy and human rights. The exact dimensions of this pushback are difficult to delineate with precision because the phenomenon encompasses a highly diverse range of actions — some public, others hidden, some formal, others informal, some declamatory, others administrative. The most common elements of pushback are measures to limit the ability of domestic NGOs to access external resources. They are often directed at organizations engaged in what the governments in question consider politically sensitive activities, such as human rights advocacy, anticorruption projects, civic education, and independent media work. But the range of activities that aid-receiving governments regard as politically sensitive has widened in many places. Governments now sometimes block external support for NGO work traditionally considered to fall in the socioeconomic sphere, such as community organizing, charitable or humanitarian activities, or local accountability initiatives. Various governments have also been taking steps to block international election monitoring and have become more critical of domestic monitoring groups supported by outside actors. External aid for political party development has also become a more frequent target, with more recipient governments accusing party assistance organizations of partisan meddling.

At the core of efforts to limit external support for independent civil society are legal measures to restrict or ban foreign financing of domestic NGOs. In their most severe form, they prohibit foreign funding for domestic NGOs altogether. Less severe approaches that nevertheless often have crippling effects include limiting foreign funding to a certain percentage of an NGO's budget or banning the use of foreign funding for "political" activities, as has been the case in Ethiopia and India. Other governments, such as those in Jordan, Algeria and Nepal, allow the use of external resources but require governmental approval or impose debilitating administrative hurdles to constrict such funding.

In numerous countries, governments have created a political climate in which the recipients of foreign funding are intimidated and publicly delegitimized. Authorities in Ecuador, Malaysia, Russia, and Venezuela, for example, have depicted NGOs receiving external support as foreign agents or puppets of Western powers. Governments seeking to limit external assistance for NGOs have also tried to regulate or block the activities of international actors providing training, strategic counseling, informal advice, and moral support to civil society. They do so by formally expelling international groups, creating adverse operating conditions that will force them to leave, or by constraining them through legal and extra-legal harassment. The Egyptian government's recent arrest and prosecution of international and Egyptian NGO

workers accused of receiving illicit funding and operating without license is an especially harsh and visible example.¹

Causes

Why has pushback against international democracy and rights support become such a widespread problem only relatively recently, some 20 years after the arrival of democracy and rights assistance on the international scene? The answer lies in several interrelated international developments. Democracy assistance mushroomed in the late 1980s and early 1990s at a unique geopolitical moment. The end of the Cold War and the startling spread of democracy in the world appeared to signal a process of global normative convergence around democratic ideals and decline of sovereignty concerns. But this positive context for international democracy assistance began to change in the early 2000s.

To start with, the global spread of democracy stalled. Hybrid and semi-authoritarian regimes emerged as the most common regime type in the post-communist and developing worlds. Furthermore, active Western support for some successful popular uprisings, such as in Serbia, Georgia and Ukraine, led power holders in many countries to fear that international political assistance represented a more powerful force for change than they had initially estimated. With the onset of the U.S. war on terrorism and the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq, democracy promotion further became a synonym for "Western-led regime change," and the concept suffered a generalized crisis of legitimacy as a result.

These various trends have continued or even intensified during the past five years. Democracy continues to stagnate around the world, suspicions of Western interventionism remain intense, authoritarian challengers of liberal democratic ideals are thriving, and Western models of political and economic governance have been tarnished by domestic Western woes.

Pushback also reflects the fact that many transitional states are questioning the very idea of independent civil society as a legitimate sociopolitical sector. They view civil society actors as nimble, influential challengers to their authority, often underwritten by Western aid providers. The heightened focus on terrorism in many countries has also contributed to the closing of space for civil society support. More than 140 governments passed new counter-terrorism legislation after September 11, 2001, often in response to U.S. pressure and UN Security Council resolutions. These measures often failed to provide precise definitions of the types of acts and organizations they were meant to target and have in many cases been used to justify new civil society restrictions.²

Responding to Pushback

International actors seeking to advance democracy and rights around the world now face the challenge of how best to limit or blunt new restrictions and lay the groundwork for a longer-term evolution in a more promising direction.

Diplomatic objections to harassment of and restrictions on aid providers have at times been effective, at least to signal that international actors do seriously care about democracy and rights support. But they are rarely accompanied by any tangible consequences, especially in countries where aid providing government have countervailing security and economic interests. Concerted efforts to stop governments from enacting restrictive civil society laws have at times been more effective: in Azerbaijan, Cambodia, and Kyrgyzstan, for example, pressure by domestic and international actors appears to have had some success at preventing or repealing restrictions.

International actors have also focused on strengthening the normative foundation for democracy and rights support. In particular, they have built the case that permitting external funding of domestic civil society is a common practice among established democracies and should therefore be followed by all governments aspiring to be democratic. However, this argument fails to persuade many recipient governments who point to the wealth and power differential involved in foreign assistance. Moreover, Western democracies are in fact not immune from criticism on this issue, having at times restricted civil society or election monitoring themselves. A perhaps more fruitful argument has been that restricting access to external support violates the universally recognized right to freedom of association, as cutting off civil society organizations from external assistance often effectively means undermining their ability to carry out their work. Efforts to strengthen the international legal basis and soft law consensus on civil society's right to access external resources have focused on bolstering the UN framework for the freedom of association, strengthening the role of regional organizations, and incorporating the issue into the post-2015 Millennium Development Goals agenda and into international agreements such as bilateral investment treaties.

A further important area of responses to pushback consist of efforts at adaption and mitigation: changes in aid providers' methods of operating and the transmission of new types of knowledge that can help recipients better protect themselves against governmental harassment and surveillance. Assistance providers have for example adapted various policies of "distancing," such as moving assistance offshore to preserve support in difficult political contexts, or steering governmental assistance funds to nongovernmental organizations in third countries that may have greater flexibility to operate. Others have suggested that increasing the transparency of democracy and rights assistance might help reduce pushback measures. However, it remains debatable whether increased transparency would in fact alleviate governmental suspicions or whether it might simply put aid recipients at greater risk in sensitive environments.

Coordination and communication of responses among different policy actors has been sporadic. Donor governments appear to be scrambling to keep up with the negative tide of events. Understanding of the pushback phenomenon among many Western policy makers remains thin. More importantly, the need to maintain cooperative relations

with numerous governments that restrict external support for civil society often outweighs the impulse to push back against such restrictions in any serious way.

From this brief overview of the inadequacies of Western governments' responses to pushback, there follow some basic guidelines for doing better. Governments engaged in providing democracy and rights assistance must be prepared to respond with alacrity and vigor both to measures restricting external civil society assistance and to incidents of harassment or expulsion of organizations engaged in such work. They should base their responses on an understanding of the problem that matches the depth and seriousness of the overall phenomenon, and gauging any potential response on a full grasp of the wider demonstration effects of every incident and subsequent reaction.

Making responses to pushback more effective does not necessarily mean always making them more vocal or forceful. The point is for governments responding to pushback to incisively assess what types of response will be most effective and to be willing to dedicate the necessary diplomatic muscle and attention to carrying them out. Other guidelines for more effective responses include improving coordination among concerned governments, increasing efforts to raise the issue of pushback in different multilateral forums, allowing increased flexibility of funding in difficult political contexts, and increasing funding for programs that make protective technologies available to affected partners. In some cases, ceasing certain existing activities or refraining from implementing others when there is reason to believe that doing so may help reduce a receiving government's sensitivities about democracy and rights support.

THOMAS CAROTHERS AND SASKIA BRECHENMACHER are director and research assistant respectively in the Carnegie Endowment's Democracy and Rule of Law Program. This article is drawn from their forthcoming report, "The Closing Space Challenge for International Support for Democracy and Human Rights."

ENDNOTES

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Democratic Capacities of Turkish CSOs and the Road to Gezi Park

BY DR. SEÇİL DEREN VAN HET HOF

This paper deals with the democratic capacities of Turkish Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) based on the information provided by the research reports of the Third Sector Foundation of Turkey (TUSEV), the Turkish Economic and Social Studies Foundation (TESEV), and the Civil Society Development Centre Association (STGM) since 2005. It studies the recent street protests that reached their peak in the Gezi Park event in May of 2013. The paper explains that the lack of effectiveness of CSOs in Turkey is due to two main reasons: one being the low levels of social trust hindering citizens' active participation in CSOs, and the second being the irregular and insufficient nature of government-CSO dialogue and cooperation.

Since the mid-1990s, Turkey has witnessed an enhancement in civil society. The critical turning point in the people's perception of civil society was clearly the 1999 Marmara earthquake, when civil initiatives and organizations were far more effective than the state in providing humanitarian help and rescue. The rising trust and expectations on the role and capacity of CSOs in fostering democracy has accelerated with Turkey's rapprochement to the European Union in the early 2000s with the adoption of Copenhagen criteria.¹ Legislative changes that took place until 2005 benefitted democracy, rule of law, human rights, and minority rights. These changes proved that CSOs could be effective agencies of development and democratization in Turkey.

After 2005 the academic research on the development and potential of civil society in Turkey gained speed. This research was conducted on a national level and by CSOs. It is basically descriptive in nature. Since 2005, TUSEV, in coordination with the World Alliance for Citizen Participation (CIVICUS), STGM, and TESEV, conducted a number of research projects and prepared reports. In an overall evaluation, these reports indicate stagnation in the development of the civil sector despite the legal reforms accomplished. According to these reports, the basic characteristic of Turkey's CSO realm is that a majority of the organizations are concentrated in the five biggest cities (Istanbul, Ankara, Izmir, Adana and Bursa). Most CSOs describe their organizational goal as provision of social services; only a minority focus on advocacy and politics. Two thirds of CSOs have no organizational mission of dealing with political agenda whatsoever.² It is also reported that despite legislative reforms, government-CSO cooperation has stagnated in earlier stages; that is, government institutions decide with which CSOs they are going to communicate, and the nature of communication

is unidirectional, not reaching the form of dialogue. The democratizing effect of CSOs is not only in their capacity to bring together public interests and demands, but also in their requirement that public institutions' keep an openness to communicate, cooperate, and negotiate with them as stakeholders. This helps to maintain accountability and to sustain democratic channels in the administration.³

The major weaknesses in the Turkish context are the lack of citizen participation in CSOs and the state's unwillingness to acknowledge CSOs as stakeholders. Esmer's surveys on values in Turkish society pointed to gradually decreasing, and hence radically low, levels of social trust and tolerance.⁴ Esmer found that Turkish people did not tolerate people of different ethnic origins, different religions, different languages, guest workers, and immigrants. Akşit's research in 2002 showed that the main obstacles to participation through CSOs were the subversive state apparatus, economic problems and low levels of education.⁵ Moreover, the rising polarization in Turkish politics concerning the Kurdish problem and the secularism/Islamism debate assumes a radical political language because of low levels of citizen participation and restricted representation of demands by CSOs. Civil society actors are fractured by differences in identities, beliefs, and ideologies. They are organized in a loose, informal manner. When only a small portion of the citizenry is organized through CSOs, the democratic capacity of CSOs in influencing social and political attitudes and spreading liberal democratic and pluralist culture remains limited.⁶

Over the course of the Turkey's European Union integration process, the Turkish government started to acknowledge the importance of government-civil society dialogue and therefore initiated consultation meetings with CSOs. Despite the "Law of the Relations of Associations and Foundations with Public Institutions (Law No. 5072)" initiated in 2004, the government still has not set the criteria defining the rules of dialogue, consultation and cooperation with CSOs. Therefore, the law has moved away from its original purpose. This has caused problems in government-civil society relations. As a result, the dialogue and cooperation between the government and CSOs is still in its early stages. Turkish CSOs lack experience in lobbying, but, according to the reports, their inexperience is complicated by the government's discriminatory treatments towards CSOs. CSOs still cannot function as stakeholders in the democratic decision-making and strategic planning processes. Government bodies' dialogue with CSOs is limited to the level of informing them and sometimes asking for their feedback. However, how far the feedback provided by CSOs is reflected in legislative or administrative decisions is left unspecified.

Although CSOs are accepted as an essential part of democratization by public institutions and other stakeholders, there is still no concrete definition of civil society and CSOs in the related legislation and policy documents. The level of dialogue and partnership between public officials and CSOs is observed to be quite low, and delays in information sharing and consultation are frequently experienced. The relation-

ship between CSOs and government institutions continues to be cultivated based on the initiatives of ministries and the level of this relation varies between ministries.⁷ Despite the political discourse of international donors, such as the European Union, the United Nations, and the World Bank, referring to the need to strengthen civil society in Turkey through capacity building⁸, TUSEV's and TESEV's latest reports highlight that there are still limitations not only on the right to association but also the government's willingness to acknowledge civil activism.⁹ Turkish CSOs need experience and support to enhance their lobbying power and broaden their appeal to Turkish society. This would strengthen their advocacy activities and make them real political communication actors.

The importance of CSOs as democratic actors is highlighted when we look at the political scene in Turkey. Prime Minister Erdoğan and his Justice and Development Party (AKP) won the last national elections in 2011 with an unquestionable 50% of the vote, securing 327 seats in parliament against the 135 seats of the major opposition

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Republican People's Party. This political landscape, which leaves the AKP in complete control without any threat of political opposition, in fact requires deeper and more serious cooperation and dialogue with CSOs. CSOs form a stable ground for political cooperation and negotiation, but once the demands are pushed to the streets, the chances of mediation and reconciliation become rather slim.

The 2013 Gezi Park protests spread out from a small urban park in Taksim to the rest of Istanbul and other public squares across Turkey. The protests were allegedly against the "urban transformation" policies of the AKP government. However, the issues expanded to a wider agenda including civil rights, individual and collective freedoms, and demands of participation in decision-making processes on local matters. In fact, the Gezi protests were not the first of its kind: the preceding two years were marked by sporadic protests against a number of issues such as abortion rights, control over the internet, bans on alcohol, and stagnation in the process of acknowledging Kurdish rights. In all these cases, the AKP government chose not to establish a dialogue with active CSOs, but instead opted to ignore, deny, and belittle the protests as "capricious acts of a minority". Prime Minister Erdoğan called the Gezi protesters "çapulcu" (literally meaning "looter" in English), "a few extremists", "terrorists", "pawns of international powers", and

"provokers from marginal sects of society" instead of reading the events as part of democratic political communication endeavour of those who had no other means of pursuing dialogue with the government.

In fact, the Gezi protests were merely the latest in a series of popular unrest over the last three years. For example, there were numerous Kurdish protests and student movements in various cities in 2011-2012. There were protests in more than 40 cities against the government plans of filtering the internet in May 2011, protests against the government's initiative to legally restrict or ban abortion in June 2012, and anti-war protests in Istanbul and Ankara against the Turkish parliament's approval of military operations targeting Syria in October 2012.

In a recent article, Kuyumlu refers to Lefebvre in describing "the urban as a particular locus of resistance and activism for claiming 'the right to the city'".¹⁰ The city is also the locus of civil society organizations, and the culture of organizing and participating under the roof of CSOs is a particularly urban phenomenon. The spread of the Gezi protest to other cities in Turkey proved that the issue was not confined to a few sycamore trees¹¹ and that if CSOs are incapable, then citizens were prepared to use any communicative means to claim their rights. Doris Graber describes political protests as part of political language.¹² Particularly in a media-dominated political environment, protests become an effective means of seeking public attention and gaining political potential. Political communication scholar Brian McNair described street demonstrations and protests as the 'spectacular' in efforts to command the media agenda and influence public opinion.¹³ It is a practice of political communication away from the sphere of electoral politics, and for many an indicator of its failure to satisfy popular concerns. As a result, I suggest seeing the protests that flourished around the local issue of Gezi Park as the last resort for opening democratic communication and negotiation channels with the government, and striving for the political capacity that CSOs had been blocked off since 2004.

The European Commission's last progress report on Turkey observes "a growing and active civil society" emerged after the Gezi Park protests.¹⁴ However, the Report also mentions that CSOs are still not considered by the power elite as legitimate stakeholders in democracy as illustrated by many examples mentioned above. The European Commission advised that "government-civil society and parliament-civil society relations should be improved through systematic, permanent and structured consultation mechanisms at policy level, as part of the legislative process and with regard to non-legislative acts at all levels of administration."¹⁵ Present legislation on associations and foundations does not encourage any inherent participatory mechanisms whereby CSOs can voice demands and be involved in policy-making. Secondary legislation limiting the right to publish press statements and requiring advance notification of demonstrations also restricts the democratic potential of CSOs in Turkey.

In his last book, *Justice as Fairness*, John Rawls defined two key components of liberal democracy: a reasonable pluralism

and the political power of free and equal citizens as a collective body.¹⁶ CSOs are proven to be “most threatened by government though non-recognition”¹⁷ and are reduced to those organizations whose behavior is ‘acceptable’ according to government terms. The main concern here should be to develop a new political language through which civic participation is not confined to political parties as the locus of political action¹⁸, but extended to larger sections of society through dialogue and cooperation with CSOs. A government such as the AKP with decent popular support has the power to develop a new political language through which civic participation is freed from the confines of political parties as the locus of political action.¹⁹ It can activate mechanisms of legitimation by extending policy-making processes to larger sections of society through dialogue and cooperation with CSOs.

The Gezi Park protests brought together people from backgrounds that are thought of as irreconcilable: environmentalists, gay and lesbian activists, Alevi and anti-capitalist Sunni Muslims, Kurds and Kemalists, white collar-workers and homeless children, feminists, aviation workers on strike, trade unions, football/sports clubs and fans, mothers of the “looters”, university professors, and artists. Research conducted by KONDA Research and Consultancy showed that this was not just a youth movement, and those people protesting on the streets were not members of any kind of organization despite the counter narrative of conspiracy theories. The protestors were united with the aim of being recognized by the government.

Initially, the Gezi protests were an outcry of the urban citizenry, which already had a relatively stronger associational culture. However, the following days indicated that this outcry was not limited to the urban middle classes. In what Ahmet İnsel called the “revolt for self-respect”,²⁰ many marginalized identities found their own demands for recognition in the face of the majoritarian language of the prime minister. The Gezi protests also proved that sporadic demonstrations are not the solution, since they do not create the ground for any serious negotiation process. The protests called for a revision of the assumption that Turkish society lacks the social capital and trust necessary for an effective, politically potent, participating civil society, and its accompanying organizations. On the contrary, communities in Turkey strongly demanded to be heard by means of their CSOs. This is a process that Sabine Lang calls “NGOization of local political communication”.²¹ Turkish citizens put forth their capacity to peacefully discuss local issues that directly affect their lives, and CSOs have a specific potential to provide citizens with institutions and structures where they can actively exercise political communication and democratic participation. Only by empowering CSOs as political actors, acknowledging them as legitimate agents of communication with larger sections of society, and cooperating with them as stakeholders in decision-making processes can the government de-radicalize the voices on the streets. The Gezi protests signalled that this civil society movement has officially opened a space for dialogue among

individuals who previously never felt they had a stake in the country’s politics.

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ENDNOTES

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Democracy, Civil Society and the Policy Process: Observations from Mexico

BY PABLO ESTRADA

A large body of literature on democratic transitions suggests that the presence and participation of autonomous civil society organizations (CSOs) is an indicator and contributor to democratization. This article examines the manner in which CSOs in Mexico have tried to influence the government’s policy process in combatting drug trafficking-related violence. (This body of policy is referred to in this paper as “security policy.”) It will also examine the extent to which such CSO participation has strengthened Mexican democracy.

This article argues that the presence of CSOs in almost all stages of the security policy process has ultimately strengthened democracy, because decision-making in public affairs has opened up. However, the President had a determinative role at a critical juncture by allowing CSOs to increase their scope of participation. In other words, democratic governance improved thanks to the power of the Presidency, and the persistence of some authoritarian features in the political system. Ultimately, authoritarian remnants in the political system have limited Mexican civil society.

Non-State Actors and the Policy Cycle

There are two ways of examining how non-state actors, such as CSOs, can strengthen democracy. The first is to look broadly at the role of non-state actors as participants in public administration and governance, and the second is to examine the role of non-state actors’ unique issue and expertise networks. Both of these explanations can overlap in practice.

The “public administration and governance” explanation focuses on the need to incorporate non-state actors into state activities, given many states’ poor capacity to carry out everyday public administration duties. As a result of the Washington Consensus, some of the duties of public agencies in states around the world have been translated to the private sector.¹ However, these privatization initiatives shared some flaws. For instance, the private sector was unable to define collective interests due to its natural logic of seeking particular gains and inability to provide representation. In some cases, these flaws have been addressed by tools that facilitate interaction between citizens and public officials, such as accountability, transparency, and re-regulation.

Relatedly, the “issue network” argument focuses on the expertise of civil society actors regarding specific policy issues. Issue networks are defined as “webs of influence [that] provoke and guide the exercise of power.”² Issue networks have two characteristics: scope and expertise. Scope refers to all actors who have interest in a particular policy issue and could contribute to the design of public policies. Expertise accounts for the knowledge, skills, and administrative resources of these groups. Issue networks are typically made up of groups of citizens who are directly effected by a given policy change. When these issue actors cooperate with policymakers, the result can be better-informed laws and regulations.

The above attempts to explain *why* non-state actors would participate in policy planning, but the question of *how* they can be allowed to participate remains. The following section offers an explanation of how this process unfolded in the case of Mexican civil society and security policy.

Security and Civil Society Organizations in Mexico

Civil society organizations entered the discussion of Mexican security policy in the late 1990s, when the decentralization of power away from the seventy-year ruling party, the PRI, was taking place and more spaces for substantive political opposition and participation were being opened.

Many security-oriented CSOs were created in response to the personal experiences of their leaders, mainly the kidnapping of a spouse or a child (hence the origin of their expertise). In addition to these traumas, the victims’ relatives sometimes faced law enforcement and judicial systems from which they could not easily obtain the necessary help due to organizational complexity, incompetence, or corruption. These CSOs based their indictment of Mexican security policy on experiencing and documenting its failures

firsthand, generating pressure on the government to address security issues.³

The influence of CSOs on drug trafficking-related security issues changed over time. They went from underscoring citizens' concerns on the issue to having an actual voice in lawmaking. Here I present methods that illustrate these changes: mobilization and dialogue.

Mobilization, in the form of protests, took place in Mexico City and in other big cities on November 29, 1997, June 27, 2004, and August 30, 2008. In each case, the objective was the same: to remind the government that it was being negligent about the public safety and to insert this security issue the public agenda.

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These protests shared a number of characteristics. First, CSOs were always present, serving as a "showcase" for the marches. They were the main organizers of the marches, where they received media attention and publicized their causes (namely their members' experience with crime, presented as evidence that the government was oblivious to the security problem). For instance, the 1997 march was coordinated by a group of citizens who later became Mexico United Against Crime, one of the largest national organizations on the topic.

Second, beyond the large logistical role of CSOs in the protests, individual citizens were the core of the mobilizations. Organizers tried to emphasize the individual stories of the people who marched, which always included victims or their relatives, underlining the collective nature of their claims, rather than framing their protests as the interest of a specific organization.

Third, the protests had evolving political undertones. In 1997, when the PRI was still in power, protests against poor security policy included an element of protest against the remaining authoritarian traits in the regime, which was often perceived to be indifferent to citizen interests. After the PRI left the Presidency in 2000, demonstrations focused their attention on their substantive goal: demanding a change to specific security policies. Furthermore, in 2008, once the political system was further democratized, there were even accountability demands. Many protestors chanted, "If you [public authorities] can't [deal with the problem of insecurity], quit!" The specifics of these demands over time were actually a function of the nature of the regime: during the end of the PRI era, protests were about opening spaces for citizen and opposition voices. Conversely, after the ousting

of the PRI, the objective of demonstrations was to have the government actually listen to these citizen voices, and change their policies accordingly.

Fourth, over time, protests widened their scope of participation, enlarging the visibility of the members of the security policy network. In 1997, the main protagonists of the protests were members of the upper and mid-income urban classes of Mexico City, accompanied by politicians of opposition parties. In 2004, this socio-demographic feature persisted, along with another group that attracted media attention: the mothers of young women murdered in impoverished areas of the northern state of Chihuahua. By 2008, the array of participants was even more diverse, in large part because protests took place simultaneously in Mexico City and in other major urban areas of the country, allowing local claims to be expressed closer to their own authorities.

As an example of mobilization, the Movement for Peace with Justice and Dignity deserves a special mention. Its relevance is in the fact that it seems to have provided a new breath to the series of protests against violence, whose outcomes were limited to verbal support from and a closed-door meeting with high-level officials. The Movement was the first large group to emerge in the context of President Felipe Calderón's confrontational policy against drug trafficking organizations. Its concerns were not only due to kidnappings or robberies as in previous demonstrations, but the high number and indiscriminate targeting of victims. Organizing a series of treks in the regions of the country most affected by violence, the Movement collected first-hand testimonies about drug trafficking organization-related violence.

All this contributed to the general message from NGOs to the government that the security problem should be addressed in a different way. Clearly, the scope and the expertise of the security policy network were very large, and the state was not demonstrating sufficient capacity in addressing the security problem. A window of opportunity opened to allow non-state actors to participate in the security policy discussions.

From July to October 2010 President Felipe Calderón hosted a series of meetings called "Dialogues for Security". He suggested the objective was to create consensus around the anti-narcotics policy.⁴ The first of these meetings was with a selection of CSOs that urged the President to fully implement the penal reform (to ensure effective and just trials to criminals) and to work with Congress to pass a new anti-kidnapping law. More meetings took place with representatives of the political parties, the media, the academia, religious organizations, the judicial and legislative federal powers, and state governors. Each time, specific problems and potential solutions for the security policy were discussed. In spite of their spirit, it is doubtful that the dialogues produced any relevant outcomes. Noticeably, no concrete long-term agreement or document was agreed upon.⁵

A second round of dialogues took place in the summer of 2011. Two of the meetings were with the Movement for Peace and victims of drug-related violence. They asked the President to include provisions in the anti-crime policy to

give victims of drug trafficking-related violence legal, health, and psychological assistance, as well as protection from any eventual retaliation of criminals. This translated into an agreement to produce an important new “Law for Victims,” with a draft coordinated by the Movement itself. In a matter of months both legislative chambers approved the law.

When President Calderón received the law in April 2012 (his last year in office), he refused to sign it and returned it to Congress, arguing that it had details that could contradict other regulations. He feared its possible beneficiaries could meet burdensome bureaucratic procedures instead of a timely attention, and casted doubts on the budgetary viability of some of the proposed services. Some politicians and CSOs supported Calderón’s points of view, while others, including the Movement for Peace, argued that the President had broken the agreement reached at during the dialogues and created a spin-off movement, Yes to the Victims’ Law. The controversy over the law reached all the way to the Supreme Court.

This controversy did not abate until Calderón’s successor, Enrique Peña, removed the claim from the Supreme Court within days of beginning his term. He immediately signed the law and promulgated it. Controversy over the flaws in the law, however, remained unresolved, and arguments to reform it quickly emerged. Most of the CSOs that participated in the protests and the dialogues with the President chose to prepare a reformed draft of the law.

Civil Society Organizations and the Security Policy in Mexico: Between Democracy and Authoritarian Remnants

This case study of CSO participation in the creation of the Victim’s Law sheds light on the unique institutional challenges of civil society in transitioning democracies. In many cases, the opportunities available to CSOs are limited by authoritarian remnants in political systems. This case study also demonstrates how the “public administration and governance” explanation and the “issue network” explanation are useful ways to explain the process by which Mexican CSOs sought to influence security policy related to drug-trafficking violence. CSOs made it clear that they possessed the necessary expertise to participate in the security policy network. Their leaders had suffered the effects of violence and collected stories and demands from other victims. Accordingly, authorities opened the governance of the security policy, tacitly acknowledging that they required feedback from other kinds of actors.

Thus, the security policy process opened to CSOs in Mexico, strengthening the country’s democracy. However, institutional hindrances remained. First, it is uncertain whether a similar interaction between CSOs and the government could take place in any other policy area. In other words, the protests discussed here left no legacy of mechanisms to institutionalize CSO participation in policymaking. Secondly, it is striking that the President played such a major role in opening the way for CSO participation in security policymaking. Although the CSO-led protests substantially

increased public pressure on the authorities to change security policy, the President was the key figure at critical junctures. He alone decided to hold dialogues with civil society; he commissioned CSOs to draft the Victim’s Law; he then refused to sign the law he commissioned, and his successor finally broke the stalemate and signed it. His role as gatekeeper over which voices could be heard resembled the authoritarian rule of the PRI.

The plight of CSOs to be included in the security policy process ultimately did not leave an institutional legacy to strengthen Mexican democracy, as their participation was highly guided by the President. As many theorists have noted before, it is not uncommon for reformers in the government elite to open up a closed system and contribute to the transition or consolidation of democracy. By encouraging CSO participation in security policy, the President could have been such a reformer. But without an institutional legacy that formalizes CSO involvement in the policy process, the degree to which democracy has been strengthened is called into question. Why such a trait of authoritarianism persists is a question to be addressed in further research.

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ENDNOTES

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Life Without Lukashenko: Creating Civil Space in Belarus

BY EMILY KEHRT

In the nineteen years since he took power in Belarus, Alexander Lukashenko has expanded his restrictive regime into nearly every corner of society. Today, there is very little space between the extensive Lukashenko state and the private lives of citizens, and this lack of civil society is detrimental to Belarus' small but persistent opposition movement and dangerous for the future of Belarus at large. Lacking public space beyond the state, the opposition has little chance of finding a foothold where it can grow into a national movement, and the absence of a culture of civic association creates a significant risk of another oppressive regime should Lukashenko fall. In order for a chance at a successful and vibrant opposition movement and the hope of a post-Lukashenko democracy in Belarus, the country must first carve out a public space that exists outside of — but not necessarily in opposition to — the state.

After almost seventy-five years of Russian rule, Belarus declared its independence as the Soviet Union was collapsing in 1990. Lukashenko, the former director of a state-run farm, defeated five other candidates to win the presidency in Belarus' first post-communist elections in 1994.¹ After the disintegration of the Soviet Union and before Lukashenko's election, life for Belarusian citizens had been characterized by many of the hallmarks of post-communist countries in the early years of reform: extreme social upheaval, a declining economy, falling standards of living, and uncertainty about the future. The population found reassurance in Lukashenko's firm and clear Soviet-style approach to governance.² In the early years of his presidency, he secured Russian preferential economic treatment for the country, particularly in the form of significant oil and natural gas subsidies, which allowed for over ten years of continuous growth. By 2005 Belarus's GDP was almost 30% higher than it was before Lukashenko's initial election.³ The growing economy further secured Lukashenko's early popularity, which he capitalized on to consolidate power and expand

the role of the presidency and the scope of the state with relatively little opposition.

With Russian subsidies in place, Lukashenko quickly struck a deal with his citizens: his government would provide substantial state benefits with the implicit understanding that the price was complacency in the face of the state's extensive power. Today, Belarus operates like a Soviet strongman state. The country's legislature and judiciary is virtually entirely loyal to the president and there is almost no independent media.⁴ Presidential decrees are equivalent to law and are enforced by a vast and powerful state security apparatus, and 70% of workers are employed by the state.⁵ The sprawling government leaves little room for any external association or organization. It is the regime's intentional denial of this room that has made cultivating a broad civil society, and as a result, a successful opposition movement, so difficult.

Denying Civil Space

While opposition movements sprung up fairly quickly upon Lukashenko's moves to consolidate power, due to the strength of the state and the generally high popularity of the regime, early dissidents did not make much headway. However, since the 2001 presidential elections, publicly protesting election results and human rights abuses has become more common, though such protests have exposed the lengths security forces will go to suppress even early inklings of dissent. Peaceful protests after elections have increasingly been met with outsized police force and violence.⁶ In 2006, activists attempted to capitalize on the spirit of the Color Revolutions throughout Eastern Europe and Central Asia with a “Blue Jeans” revolution, which was quickly subdued. The Lukashenko regime afforded so little public space and its security forces were so powerful that the movement could not find any room to grow.⁷ Freedom House estimates that up to 1,000 protestors were arrested in election protests that same year.⁸ Among those arrested was one of the opposition candidates, Alaksandar Kazulin, who witnesses say was beaten by security forces. Kazulin was sentenced to five-and-a-half years in prison on charges of hooliganism, disrupting public order, and organizing group actions for his role in election protests.⁹ While Kazulin was released in 2008, seven opposition candidates from the 2010 presidential elections were similarly arrested following election protests.¹⁰ In 2011, Ales Bialiatski, one of the country's most prominent opposition leaders and human rights activists was arrested on charges of tax evasion and sentenced to four-and-a-half years in prison and confiscation of all of his property, prompting calls for his release from the United States, the European Union, and a United Nations Special Rapporteur on Belarus.¹¹

The extension of oppression tactics beyond police force demonstrates that the government has become increasingly skilled at discouraging grassroots-level political activism. A 2005 change to the country's criminal code, Article 193-1, has made it illegal for anyone to work for or with an unregistered organization.¹² It has become an increasingly

complex bureaucratic process to register a non-governmental organization, making it even more difficult for activists to organize.¹³ NGOs seen as unfavorable by the regime also face extremely high rents for office space or are unable to find space to rent at all. This puts them at risk of running afoul of another regulation that requires organizations to have a legal address.¹⁴ In the years just prior to the implementation of Article 193-1, the government dissolved scores of NGOs, rendering working for them illegal upon the passage of the legislation.¹⁵ In 2010, less than a quarter of the country's 118 administrative regions had operating NGOs, while government organized non-governmental organizations were becoming more prevalent throughout the country.¹⁶

The combination of hard and soft oppression of activists, along with a bloated state and expansive state security forces has created an environment where most public action and association is forced to take place within the context of the state. There is the private life of individuals and families and there is the sprawling state, but in between, where a civil society should be able to grow, there is very little. As a result, it is difficult for the opposition in Belarus to grow into a real movement. There is not a culture of association or participation, and without a public arena, there is nowhere for the country to have a conversation about the benefits and drawbacks of the Lukashenko government, or for the movement to gain the recruits it needs to grow. Many of the country's most prominent opposition leaders are in jail or in exile, and activists who do remain free in Belarus often keep a very low profile because any public attention would draw ire from the state and further hamper the work they are able to do.

Creating Space for Civil Society

Belarus may have more success in developing an opposition movement that can grow in spite of the state, as well as an increased chance of democracy eventually taking root, if it first works to create room for civil society in the country. Developing space in a country that actively works to deny it is a monumental task, but it is a critical step in increasing the probability of a democratic future in Belarus. There is serious risk in a sudden future without Lukashenko. With so little public space apart from the state, the rapid exit of Lukashenko would create a dangerous power vacuum in a country unfamiliar with democracy. Where there are so few voices to act as a check on power there is a significant likelihood that another dictator would arise before democracy could take hold.¹⁷ Civil society can help the population prepare for a democratic future while simultaneously opening up a space for an expanding opposition movement.

Many in Belarus today, particularly outside of Minsk, look at NGOs with suspicion and are weary of participating in any associational activity outside of the state. There is a common association of NGOs with political opposition, and NGOs are regularly maligned by state media.¹⁸ Apprehension about participation reinforces the lack of civil society, which can be a potent tool for teaching a population the

power of self-reliance. Voluntary associations can demonstrate the ability of people to organize and tackle problems on their own, which over time can ease reliance on the state and encourage the population to look inward for solutions.

While it may seem like a step backwards, civil society need not be created in opposition to the state — in fact, such a civil society would be unable to carve out the space it needs in Belarus. But even civil society that is sanctioned to a degree by the state can strengthen Belarusians' ability to organize and create an independent associational life that will be beneficial to the opposition movement and to the country. In a country that lacks a culture of participation, taking part in or supporting an association directly opposing the state is a leap, one that seems completely foreign. Examining the realities of civil society in Belarus in order to identify ways to change perceptions of civil society even under current political conditions is an important first step

The Lukashenko regime afforded so little public space and its security forces were so powerful that the movement could not find any room to grow.

towards creating an environment where public participation is more accepted. If activists can open up some room for association and public conversation outside of the state but not in opposition to it, they can ease suspicion and begin to clear the mental and cultural barriers that can hinder the opposition's growth. Ultimately, an independent civil society, even one that is not centered around regime change, is beneficial to the opposition: any public participation outside of the state will help to develop an alternate source of power to the pervasive dominance of the regime.

Even in a country as repressed as Lukashenko's Belarus, there are cracks that can be exploited to lay the foundations of civil society. The regime relies on an implicit guarantee of social services in exchange for political subservience, but the economy in Belarus has been in crisis since Russia ended most of its oil and natural gas subsidies in 2007. As a result, it is more difficult for the regime to ensure the full range of services it has in the past. Lukashenko has shown far more lenience with NGOs whose purpose is to fill in the growing gap and provide social services.¹⁹ In 2012, the Belarusian parliament introduced a new law, "On introduction of alterations and addenda to certain laws of the Republic of Belarus on the issues of social service." The law provides a mechanism for NGOs, civil society organizations, and entrepreneurs to compete for government funding in order to provide social services to the population.²⁰ Previously, the types of NGOs that could apply for state assistance was very limited and typically did not include social service organizations, and assistance consisted of subsidies rather than direct funding.²¹ There are obvious drawbacks and limitations that accompany NGOs relying on government funding, par-

ticularly in a country as tightly controlled as Belarus. But the regime's interest in supporting social service NGOs rather than relying on the state as it has in the past offers an opportunity for growth in civil society. Although organizations that apply must be properly registered, and thus have already to an extent been vetted by the government, there is greater opportunity for direct citizen action, which can provide important lessons on the power of independent citizens and their ability to organize. While it is true that these organizations are dependent on state funds, much of their success will rest on their own management and outreach skills. Their achievements can provide examples as well as lessons learned.

Along with providing care to rural, impoverished, or sick neighbors, NGOs that focus on small-scale community problem-solving or groups that celebrate Belarusian heritage and traditions are relatively apolitical options.²² In 2012, the categories with the greatest numbers of registered NGOs included sports groups, "charitable public associations," and organizations focused on "knowledge, culture, and leisure."²³ Although organizing around these topics may not directly defy the regime, ignoring the reality of what is currently permitted in Belarus would be a missed opportunity. Organizations that focus on more benign activities will be less likely to encounter the bureaucratic and legal difficulties faced by more overtly political organizations, while improving self-reliance and widening the public space in the country. More civil space and greater faith in citizen organizations is an important step towards creating an environment where democracy can take root.

Additionally, political and economic life in Belarus revolves around Minsk, and as a result, the regime's attention is largely on Minsk and is less engaged in other parts of Belarus. There has been less persecution of activists working for unregistered NGOs in eastern Belarus, and registered NGOs are typically not monitored as closely by the government.²⁴ Belarus outside of Minsk, especially eastern Belarus, may offer a freer location for new NGOs — and civil society — to flourish, especially if civil society activists focus on nurturing groups and activities that are not as threatening to the regime.

Belarus is an anomaly, a country that clings to its Soviet past as many of its neighbors embrace Europe and the west. Lukashenko's tight grip on power has not permitted the country to move beyond 1994, and his autocratic tactics become more honed with each new challenge the state faces. But the world beyond Belarus is vastly different than it was in 1994, and inevitably, changes will continue to creep into the isolated country. Working to establish a non-state civil space is perhaps the most crucial step that activists can take to both encourage those changes and to be prepared to confront the massive transformation they can eventually usher in. The opposition movement should not abandon its defiance of the regime, but it should also work to expand the apolitical public space in the country with the knowledge that the mere existence of that space is likely to pay rewards to the movement. If activists can pry open room between the state and private lives and can plant the seeds of self-reliance and independent organization, they will prepare

for and ultimately hasten the inevitable day that Belarus becomes Belarus after Lukashenko.

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D&S Guest Op-Ed: Solidarity and Civil Society: A Warning Tale

BY ERIC CHENOWETH

In the West, the Solidarity trade union in Poland remains a symbol for the triumph of “civil society” against the might of communist dictatorship. Its massive rise in 1980 as a result of nationwide strikes and its ultimate successful struggle for freedom in 1989 eight years after the government tried to crush it with the imposition of martial law has become the stuff of historical and academic legend. Solidarity’s success — at least its political victory in semi-free elections in June 1989 — is widely interpreted as propelling the collapse of communist throughout the entire region.

Yet, the story of Solidarity, both before and after 1989, has been widely misunderstood or mistold, especially in the field of “democracy promotion” and in the study and practical application of theories of civil society.

Oddly, Solidarity’s character as a trade union has been lost. During the “official” conference in Warsaw celebrating the 25th anniversary of the birth of Solidarity in 2005, “From Solidarity to Freedom”, the most common characterizations of Solidarity were as a mass political movement for freedom against communism, a social movement for human rights, an embodiment of Catholic (and especially John Paul II’s) social teaching, and an amorphous representation of “civil society”. Timothy Garton Ash wrote of Solidarity’s peaceful victory in 1989 in broad political terms: as being a final repudiation of the violent heritage of the French Revolution. All of these have elements of truth, but they fail to describe Solidarity and its meaning.

The Solidarity movement was first and foremost a trade union. It arose out of prolonged nationwide strikes that erupted in August 1980. While the strikes began as spontaneous protests against drastic price increases, they quickly became highly organized, with local strike committees and then inter-factory strike committees formed in industrial enterprises in all regions. At least three million workers were democratically represented in the four agreements signed by the government to end the strikes, the most famous being the Gdansk Accords. All four had as the first point of agreement the recognition of the right of workers to form free trade unions. The Independent and Self-Governing Trade Union, Solidarity (N.S.Z.Z. Solidarnosc) was formally created on September 17, eighteen days after the signing of the Gdansk Accords. Within two weeks it had ten million members organized in a unique national structure representing workers both on a regional and enterprise level. Based on its model, national unions of farmers, students, academics, police and others were also formed.

The legal existence of the Solidarity trade union over the next 16 months — until the communist government imposed martial law in December 1981 — allowed mass participation in representational elections and collective bargaining and negotiations at local, regional, and national levels. Members debated policies, voted on agreements determining workplace rules, gained important victories for improving wages, working conditions, and safety, and expressed themselves in publications, protests, and strikes. As a result, despite the mass internment of more than 10,000 union leaders with the imposition of martial law, these structures were quickly reorganized and they continued to function “underground” for eight years.

While resistance to martial law and opposition to the communist government took many forms in the period of 1981-89 — including independent publishing, education, culture, human rights, and youth initiatives — the survival of the Solidarity movement depended on the continued strength of the trade union structures and their workplace, local, and regional organization. Although in most West-

ern capitals, the trade union Solidarity was discounted as a social force, well organized strikes in the summer of 1988, especially in the industrial centers of Silesia, Lower Silesia, and the Baltic region, forced the government to admit it had failed in repressing Solidarity, leading to the Roundtable Negotiations. Again, the first demand of the strikers and the first point of the agreement was the relegalization of the trade union, whose revitalized structure was the basis for Solidarity's victory in semi-free elections held on June 4, 1989. Those elections, while intended by the government to confirm the existing communist political structure, in the end led to its collapse when Polish society voted in near-unanimity for Solidarity's candidates (for contested seats) and refused to vote for communist candidates (in non-contested seats).

Following 1989, the political leadership of Solidarity that assumed power was convinced that Poland needed "shock therapy," an economic policy requiring swift and brutal reorganization of the economy (an end to subsidies, floating prices, dismantling the welfare state, and a quick sell-off of industrial enterprises). The result was high unemployment (reaching 25 percent) and, not surprisingly, a drastic drop-off in trade union membership. Solidarity, as a trade union, was purposely and permanently weakened. While initially, the trade union had played an important stabilizing factor in the transition, over time it was relegated to a minor role in politics and the economy, with less than ten percent representation for all unions.

No social institution representing citizens' interests has replaced Solidarity, resulting in an extreme "free market" economy that ideologues previously only dreamed of. Legislation has effectively abolished the 8-hour workday, imposed individual instead of collective contracts on most workers, increased the mandatory retirement age to 67, privatized public pensions, and destroyed most elements of a welfare safety net. Education and health care are in permanent. Unemployment has been at 13 percent or higher all but three years since 1989 and poverty is at permanently high levels. The consequences are severe: a migratory and demographic time bomb. Two million Poles aged 18-30 have left Poland in the last ten years, most of them permanently, while the birth rate has fallen to 1.3 per woman.

Does the trade union foundation for Solidarity's political victory and the subsequent destruction of that foundation for Poland's democracy have relevance today for the social movements of other countries or for democracy promotion?

Although the political victory achieved in Poland in 1989 seems inconceivable *without* the type of organizational, participatory, and representative structure possible through trade union organization, interestingly the stress in both political theory regarding democracy movements and its practical application on the ground has been on the centrality of a more amorphous and de Tocquevillian concept of civil society representing different group interests or functions: media, youth, parents, community groups, human and civil rights activists, voters, political parties, among others. In this narrative, trade unions are generally seen as playing less or

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even an insignificant role in transitions from dictatorship to democracy. Democracy promotion generally focuses on political, youth, and media structures or on the spread of technology to the masses.

In looking at other cases of political change over the last 25 years, however, the importance of trade unions in civil society is worth reconsidering. Two examples where trade unions played a positive role in stable social and political transformations stand out: the Workers' United Center of Chile (CUT) (and other trade unions like the Colegio de Profesores in Chile) and the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) and the Federation of South African Trade Unions (FOSATU) were key structures in the resistance movements against the Pinochet and apartheid dictatorships, respectively, as well as in the specific events that transformed both regimes (the "No Vote" campaign in the constitutional referendum in Chile in 1988 and the strikes of 1988-89 in South Africa that increased political pressure for negotiations and the release of Nelson Mandela). But other cases are less well known: the national strike called by the renegade trade union federation in Czechoslovakia in 1989 accelerated the final collapse of the regime and propelled Vaclav Havel to the presidential palace. More recently, the trade unions in Tunisia played a central role in the demonstrations overthrowing the Ben Ali dictatorship. In each of these cases, also, like in Poland, trade unions were important stabilizing factors in the initial transition to democracy. In Tunisia, today, the main trade union federation is in the unusual position of being a trusted arbitrator among political parties and also a leader in demands for early elections and establishing a secular constitution.

The more important issue for democracy theorists, however, may be in other recent cases of political change where trade unions have not played as important a role and where revolutions or transformations have been organized by less structured social movements. Most post-Soviet republics, lacking any strong social movements, have descended into dictatorship. In the "color revolutions" of Serbia, Ukraine, Georgia, and Kyrgyzstan, where mass demonstrations initiated by youth movements overthrew dictatorial regimes, non-democratic political parties ultimately triumphed over pro-democratic parties, setting back democratic change. Smaller, non-representative civil society organizations in each of these countries were unable to create a foundation for building stable democratic institutions. To differing degrees, the governments reverted to previous dictatorial practices. More significant, perhaps, is the case of Egypt, where the

initial revolution against President Mubarak and then the popular movement to overthrow the Muslim Brotherhood government were sparked by the small liberal April 6 Movement, which has a limited membership and self-selected leadership. Without any strong organization or political movement to counter it, however, the military reassumed control of the government and has undertaken a full-fledged attack on Egypt's civil society.

Poland's Solidarity movement was a unique one. There is no other example in history of such a mass-based democratic organization arising within a functioning dictatorial political system. Indeed, there is no case in the annals of trade union history where a labor movement was so quickly formed and so well organized to represent nearly an entire workforce. Yet, while unique, the example of Poland's Solidarity movement may teach important lessons for social movements in other countries and more importantly for democracy promotion organizations and foundations. The lesson may be that without a mass-based structure representing such an important segment of society — workers — and creating real opportunities for developing citizen participation, democratic action, and elected leadership, the foundation for democratic change is weak and even long-standing democratic victories are at risk.

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Tea Party Influence on Shutdown Politics

BY MEGHAN STUESSY

While the American media often depicts the Tea Party as a small fringe group of radicals, their recent influence on the October 2013 government shutdown suggests that the Tea Party may be becoming a formidable social movement. Perhaps political scientists should have seen this coming. Because the Tea Party is a powerful civic organization relative to immobilized Republican moderates, the Tea Party was able to leverage its influence within Republican Party to achieve its ideological goals, notably influencing the context of the government shutdown. This article provides a theoretical framework to view the Tea Party as an indicator of modern civil society and concludes with a case study of Tea Party influence on Republican congressional leadership's shutdown tactics.

Although the prominent thesis of Robert Putnam's *Bowling Alone* implies that Americans are becoming less civically engaged and less liable to join social groups, the Tea Party

movement functions as a bridge between Putnam's conception of civil society and modern social movements. In their essay "*Making Sense of the Civic Engagement Debate*," Theda Skocpol and Morris Fiorina adapt Putnam's thesis and suggest that rather than seeing a decline in civil society, modern definitions of what constitute civil society have changed. One such example of this new definition is the rise of the Tea Party in the Republican caucus. Skocpol writes, "Our national government appears to have bitten off much more than it could chew, and many conservatives and liberals are focusing instead on extragovernmental forms of activity."¹ Civic organizations such as the Tea Party help define the role of government in society and unify its members around their common goal of limited federal government. Through Skocpol's definition, the Tea Party is a modern incarnation of civil society.

Theorists of American civic engagement argue that rather than a decline in civil society, the United States is experiencing a re-definition of what constitutes civil society. Kay Schlozman, Sidney Verba, and Henry Brady indict the inequality of civic participation as the root of any perceived decline in the process. They argue that this inequality unfairly advantages certain players in the system so that their voices are heard loudest. Schlozman writes, "At present, the decline of civic engagement is a matter of contention. The inequality of civic engagement is unambiguous."² This inequality results from societal and economic factors. The Tea Party in particular has successfully mitigated these difficulties as they are a coalition of wealthier Americans, many of whom have more time and resources at their disposal.

The Schlozman article posits that while in the past unions and churches were prominent social institutions, they are now experiencing a time of reduced influence in determining political party agendas. Kevin Arceneaux and Stephen Nicholson find empirical evidence supporting the claim that Tea Party members attend church more frequently than the general public and are more likely to identify as born-again Christians.³ If Schlozman is correct in her analysis that unions and churches are becoming less sought out as instruments of civic engagement, Tea Party members' dedication to churches might be one factor that supports their increased levels of civic engagement relative to other political activist groups.

Schlozman's article also asserts that political parties and activists disproportionately seek to mobilize wealthier Americans to their causes. In her analysis, affluent Americans with incomes exceeding \$125,000 annually make up only 3% of the population, but make up 40% of recruited political contributions. Conversely, Americans earning less than \$49,999 in annual income make up only 22% of recruited political contributions.⁴ Similarly, the authors find that affiliation with civic involvement organizations rises alongside income, suggesting that the wealthy are more politically involved than those who are not as wealthy.⁵ In a separate study, Steven Rosenstone and John Hanson conclude, "... People who have ample resources are far more likely to

participate in campaigns and elections than people who have few resources.”⁶ In Arcenau’s profile, he finds that Tea Party supporters “tend to be wealthier than the general population.”⁷ Because Tea Party members are wealthier, it is reasonable to suggest that they are more civically engaged than the general population.

In order for civil society to thrive, Schlozman explains, “Participation in voluntary activity matters for three broad categories of reasons: the development of the capacities of the individual, the creation of community and the cultivation of democratic virtues, and the equal protection of interests in public life.”⁸ Currently we see that these three factors are being developed within the Tea Party. Demographic indicators show that members of the Tea Party are economically well off, white, and educated, allowing these individuals to participate more effectively in politics. The Tea Party community is also developing beyond disassociated grassroots communities. Either through their adoption by the Republican Party or through their own inner push for national recognition, the Tea Party is becoming a nationalized political movement.

Building off of this theoretical basis, Skocpol recently teamed up with other scholars to investigate how Schlozman’s new definition of civil society applies to the Tea Party. In 2011, Vanessa Williamson, John Coggin, and Theda Skocpol profiled Tea Party membership characteristics and found that “The vast majority of Tea Party participants are conservative Republicans, many of whom have been politically active in the past.”⁹ Indeed, Americans who have been politically active in the past often continue to find outlets for involvement. Though the authors find that the Tea Party is made up of only around 650 local organizations of varying levels of engagement, Tea Party talking points have been adopted by Republican members to the point of creating a Tea Party caucus in the U.S. House of Representatives.¹⁰ Because of their relatively small size, few would imagine that the Tea Party would have such national influence. However, the Tea Party’s influence largely stems from their vocalization within the Republican Party while moderate Republicans either stand by Tea Party actions or remain silent.

While the impact of the Tea Party is formidable, moderate Republicans are beginning to exert their influence to counter the Tea Party’s rightward trend towards more shutdowns. With the Republican Party facing its lowest popularity polls since public opinion polls began, “Prominent Republicans including Senators John McCain of Arizona and the minority leader, Mitch McConnell of Kentucky, have now come out strongly against further shutdowns. Unfortunately, they do not control Republicans in the House of Representatives.”¹¹

Although the Tea Party has been maligned as a loose grassroots phenomenon, the Tea Party can be understood as a social movement of civil values. Jeffrey Berry writes, “People who join a national citizen group are making a declaration about their political identity. They are defining who they are politically and consciously choosing to increase their commitment to that identity through the financial contribution that is required. Such participation

is not divorced from the motives that lead people to take part in community-based organizations.”¹² However, who are the “joiners” that Berry talks about?

In his work *Culture War? The Myth of a Polarized America*, Fiorina describes how the majority of the American electorate is not politically polarized. Extreme partisans, characterized by their political participation, consumption of partisan media, and immovable positions, give off the impression that the American electorate is more polarized than it actually is. These activists are Berry’s “joiners,” and these activists skew the legislative agenda towards their own partisan goals.

Fiorina writes, “There is little evidence that Americans’ ideological or policy *positions* are more polarized today than they were two or three decades ago, although their

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choices seem to be. [...] A polarized political class makes the citizenry appear polarized, but it is largely that — an appearance.”¹³ Fiorina theorizes that because the extreme radicals on both ends of the political spectrum are the most involved in decision-making and agenda-setting, the radicals polarize the choices for the electorate to suit themselves.

Fiorina continues, “Their rhetoric, strategies, and behavior underlie the reality of national polarization, but it is elite polarization that is largely without foundation in a polarized electorate.”¹⁴ This is consistent with the current explanation that Tea Party members are a subsection of conservative Republicanism.¹⁵ Undeniably, two Tea Party policy tenants – adhering to the current debt ceiling and the disassembly of the Affordable Care Act – influenced Republican decisions to shut down the government in October of 2013 rather than continue negotiations with Democrats.

Accounts directly after the government shutdown lamented that “The only force that can rein in Tea Party extremism – and get the nation off the road to fiscal ruin – is resurgence among Republican moderates. Unfortunately, their recent performance has not been impressive.”¹⁶ Because the Republican Party is being unduly pushed by Tea Party activists who are only a small fragment of the population, the government shutdown is a perfect case-study of the

influence of an extreme subsection of political advocates on deliberative government.

Berry's account of civic engagement seems oddly prophetic, as he cites Danielian and Page: "Citizens' action groups can penetrate the media, but often only at the cost of alienating the public, corrupting the groups' purposes, and presenting only the most cryptic policy reasoning – with questionable persuasive effects."¹⁷ This is certainly reflected in October public opinion polls concerned with the Tea Party, finding that 14% of Americans view the Tea Party favorably at the end of the government shutdown, declining 4% since the beginning of the shutdown.¹⁸ Recognizing the influence of the Tea Party on the government shutdown, President Obama "called on Congress to resist 'pressure from the extremes' and 'understand that how business is done in this town has to change.'"¹⁹ The pressure from the Tea Party extremes was not only recognized by President Obama, but also by Speaker of the House John Boehner.

Pew polls have since indicated that while Democrats lost favorability, Republicans were hurt more in popularity polls. Tea Party favorability suffered most due to the shutdown.²⁰ Nonetheless, the voice of the Tea Party was certainly heard in October, directly resulting from the movement's high levels of civic engagement. Because of the government shutdown, Americans wonder whether this exacerbated split between Tea Party Republicans and moderate Republicans will be remedied or whether the Tea Party will break off from mainstream Republicanism. Although the fate of the Tea Party remains to be decided, it is clear that this grassroots civic organization has developed into a formidable movement with very real consequences for American government.

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ENDNOTES

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- 2 Kay Schlozman Sidney Verba, and Henry Brady. "Civic Participation and the Equality Problem." Trans. Array *Civic Engagement in American Democracy*. New York: Brookings Institute and Russell Sage Foundation, 1999. 457.
- 3 Kevin Arceneaux and Stephen P. Nicholson. "Who Wants to Have a Tea Party? The Who, What, and Why of the Tea Party Movement." *PS: Political Science and Politics*. Vol. 45, No. 4 (October 2012), pp. 700-710. 703.
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- 5 Schlozman 455.
- 6 Steven Rosenstone and John Hansen. *Mobilization, Participation, and Democracy in America*. London: Longman Publishing Group, 2003. 159.
- 7 Arceneaux 708.

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- 10 Skocpol 28.
- 11 Simon Johnson. *A Very Expensive Tea Party*. The New York Times, 2013. <http://economix.blogs.nytimes.com/2013/10/24/a-very-expensive-tea-party>.
- 12 Jeffrey Berry. "The Rise of Citizen Groups." Trans. Array *Civic Engagement in American Democracy*. New York: Brookings Institute and Russell Sage Foundation, 1999. 369.
- 13 Morris Fiorina. *Culture War? The Myth of a Polarized America*. 3rd. New York: Longman, 2005. 9.
- 14 Fiorina 166.
- 15 Arceneaux 701.
- 16 Johnson *A Very Expensive Tea Party*.
- 17 Berry 382.
- 18 Sarah Dutton, Jennifer De Pinto, et al. "Poll: Congress, tea party take hits from government shutdown." *CBS News*. 22 Oct. 2013. http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-250_162-57608603.
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- 20 Alex Seitz-Wald. "The Tea Party Shut Down the Government and All They Got Were These Lousy Poll Numbers." *National Journal* 16 Oct. 2013. <http://www.nationaljournal.com/politics/the-tea-party-shut-down-the-government-and-all-they-got-were-these-lousy-poll-numbers-20131016>.

EDWARDS, *Continued from Page 1*

environmental issues as more countries graduate to higher-income status.

Second, what will “global co-operation” on these issues involve, like climate change, inequality and conflict, and are NGOs well-positioned to respond? Doing more of the same may be inadequate if our economic and political systems themselves need to be transformed in order to get to grips with global challenges.

Third, how can NGOs root themselves more firmly in the fabric of their own civil societies in order to sustain themselves and lever greater impact on these systems as circumstances change?

Fourth, what will happen as local institutions grow strong enough to carry out and fund their own self-generated agendas? Will “Northern” NGOs no longer be required, or will they remain essential partners in the pursuit of peace and social justice albeit working with other civil society groups in a range of different ways?

There are obviously many different answers to these questions, conditioned by context, needs and the philosophies of different NGOs. But finding any clear way forward requires a commitment to think ahead, to be self-critical and to be open to new ideas, roles and relationships, even if the values of NGOs remain a constant.

1. What is happening to foreign aid?

Does aid work? It depends on who you read and speak to, of course, but some years ago Roger Riddell provided the most rigorous and balanced answer to this question I can find: ‘where good aid is used effectively in the right circumstances, it can have a small but not determinant influence in the national context.’ It’s certainly true that child survival and life expectancy are rising nearly everywhere, and the percentage of people living below the poverty line is falling, largely as a result of progress in Asia (especially China).

The role of aid in these successes is disputed, but aid has certainly contributed to improvements in mortality and public health indicators. Its role in more complex areas like poverty-reducing growth and the development of stable political institutions is less clear, and the experience of countries like China and Brazil suggests that aid is rarely a key driver of macro-level changes which depend on internally-driven processes of politics, market development and state-building, but NGOs have never claimed to make much of a difference at the national level, so what of their contribution?

That’s obviously a vital question to which observers give very different answers, nicely encapsulated in a recent blog¹ by Duncan Green at Oxfam-GB and later covered in the Guardian. In response to a report from the Brooks World Poverty Institute that criticizes NGOs for becoming disconnected from their civil society roots and eroding their influence in the process, Green suggests that attention should be

focused on specific cases where results have been achieved, mostly at the micro-level in terms of wells dug, drugs distributed, schools built, capacities strengthened and local economies diversified, along with the occasional campaign victory around aid, arms sales and the like.

It is indisputable that NGOs have progressed in their size and sophistication over the last forty years, moving from a focus on delivering humanitarian assistance and development-related services to an integrated approach that levers broader changes in society through program innovation, research, advocacy and public education. But the critics also have a point in questioning whether more size and sophistication have led to any significant increase in the impact of NGOs on the underlying drivers of development through things like social movements, governance arrangements, and new technologies and markets.

NGOs are seen by some as ‘jacks of all trades and masters of none’, constantly adding programs and initiatives when a new fashion comes to town but never developing them to the level where they actually might make a difference, except, perhaps, humanitarian assistance. And many now resemble multinational, non-profit corporations that seem more concerned with market share and branding than with

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the old NGO mantra of “working themselves out of a job.”

Where you stand on this debate is largely a matter of context and opinion – as so often, the “truth probably lies somewhere in between” – and that requires a non-defensive process of analysis and reflection by each NGO to figure out some rigorous answers to the questions of impact and effectiveness. But it’s fair to say that in the imagination of many publics there are still more questions than answers in the record of foreign aid. These questions may eventually bring an end to the upward curve of aid spending that has characterized the last 20 years, or it may not – the end of aid has been forecast many times before. So rather than fixating on the fluctuating quantity of aid a more interesting debate is taking shape around its role, spurred on by the Busan Declaration’s call to move “from effective aid, to cooperation for effective development.”

That’s an important statement, signaling a break with the past by moving away from a narrow focus on poverty in some countries to the provision of “global public goods” from which everyone benefits and to which everyone should contribute, under a framework of sustainable development. In this framework, issues like tax justice, capital flight, climate change mitigation, labor migration, and stricter controls on arms sales take on more importance, focusing more on rich-country responsibilities and less on targets for poorer

countries themselves. And that shift raises a host of questions for NGOs to think about around their roles in emerging international regimes for financial regulation, social protection, trade, climate change management and so on. [...]

That shift should provide further support for the re-orientation of foreign aid, but perhaps the political impact of the BRICs will be more important as they become more active on the global scene, with the self-confidence to reject development orthodoxies that are shaped elsewhere, to mold their own approach to giving aid, and to show the door to foreign donors (NGO or otherwise) who are seen as insufficiently rooted on home soil. “The poor ain’t what they used to be” writes Doug Saunders in the *Globe and Mail*, “it’s time to change the game...we are no longer the wealthy superiors, but fellow countries facing a common problem,” and that’s the critical point.

Foreign aid has been an important part of the post-colonial ‘contract’ between rich and poor countries that was drawn up at the United Nations after World War Two, but it is less-suited to a multi-polar world in which rights and responsibilities are re-distributed and ‘post-development’ problems and opportunities are shared across national borders. Inequality, for example, is increasing rapidly within middle- and higher-income countries (apart from parts of Latin America), environmental sustainability indices are falling, and social indicators are getting worse even in the richest settings like the USA, including things like community cohesion, happiness, well-being, and a feeling that everyone can share in fashioning a more fulfilling vision of the future. Material success does not guarantee the deeper progress of society, so the “end of development” is simply a staging point on the journey to somewhere else.

This observation suggests three conclusions. The first is that richer countries no longer provide an adequate ‘end-point’ to aim for in the process of development, if they ever did. The second is that what ties economic growth to human flourishing is less clear and predictable than it ever was. And the third is that these linkages can’t be strengthened by doing more of the same, since that has been tried already and found wanting. [...] Instead, existing systems of politics, social relations and economics must be transformed, not simply made more accessible to the poor, in order to prosper together in an inter-locking web of steady-state economies.

Against this background, the task is not just to expand participation by poor people in the systems which exist already, which has been the default setting of NGOs for many years. For example, they have tried to expand participation by the poor in the economy, not realizing that existing economic systems are themselves unsustainable because of increasing natural resource constraints and built-in social and gender inequalities. Or they have tried to increase participation in politics among excluded groups, not recognizing that existing political systems lack the capacity to deal with deep-rooted differences and tackle vested interests. Or they have tried to encourage more participation in civil society, ignoring the fact that old models of social activism are breaking down and

new ones may be too weak to replace them. So the tasks that lie ahead are qualitatively and not just quantitatively different, and that conclusion poses fascinating questions for NGO programming, advocacy and campaigns, no more so than in the transformation of the economic system.

2. Transforming the economy

[...]“Efficiency” outweighs “sufficiency” in the calculus of economic thinking, and there is little sign that new philosophies are gaining ground. There are, for sure, lots of interesting small-scale experiments that include microfinance, commons-based production, social enterprise and supply chain work at the national and global levels. But as has been proven in the last three years, global financial instability can swamp even the most successful experiments and few are strong enough to counteract the trend towards rising inequality and resource depletion above the local level. The key issue is that economic power is increasingly concentrated in the hands of a small number of people in ways that skew incentives for change away from the interests of the majority.

What role might NGOs have in reversing this situation? Many, of course, are already active in promoting new models like fair trade and social business, but these are not (yet) transformative in either scope or scale. Their size and coverage could certainly be increased but that may not be enough, so intervening in the social and political processes that shape the costs and benefits of growth at a much more fundamental level is also worth considering i.e. the forces that determine how wealth is produced, distributed and sustained such as patterns of property ownership, market regulation and the social division of labor. [...]

3. Revitalizing civil society

[...]To meet the global challenges of the future, ethical action by citizens on a much larger scale will be required, infused through the structures of politics and the economy like a virus. New coalitions will have to be built to bring people together across political, ideological, religious and other differences in order to exert enough pressure on governments and businesses to prevent back-sliding on their commitments and push through transformative proposals against the inevitable inertia and resistance they will face. To support these processes, ideas must resonate with people of different political views (for example, ‘there are new models of progress that can benefit us all’) and be connected into peoples’ own concerns and experiences and not just the lives of distant strangers.

In recent years NGOs have tried to move their supporters from being donors to being donors plus campaigners, but these campaigns have been largely focused on foreign aid and related international issues. As the environmental strategist Chris Rose has argued therefore, people need to see themselves as ‘changers’ not ‘campaigners’ – creating new realities on the ground as well as building new majorities for policy reform and regulation. And that may require some

changes in the ways that NGOs have thought about their roles in their own civil societies, perhaps to focus less on advocacy and public education of the kind that are already well-developed and more on promoting public involvement in debating and implementing solutions in and from their own communities. In the ‘new territory’ of transformative politics and economics described in brief above, what would NGOs campaign for if no-one knows what is going to work? The development of shared capacities to reflect, argue and find common ground is likely to be more important than selling a pre-determined set of policies.

These shifts will be difficult for two reasons. The first is that many internationally-oriented NGOs have weak roots in their own civil societies because their links with their own populations have been instrumental to the primary purposes of their work overseas and in the global arena, though this is not true of those who have a pre-existing constituency defined by religious faith or professional affiliation (like nurses, teachers and farmers), or in the labor, co-operative and other movements.

The second reason is that civic participation in modern industrial societies has been declining for some time as a result of economic insecurity and increasing pressures on people’s time, the over-professionalization of voluntary action which has made it the territory of experts instead of grassroots leaders, and increased political restrictions on certain forms of civic action like advocacy and protest. This latter trend has been especially strong in recent years because of attacks by governments on groups that are accused of opposing “national interests” (commercial or political), or “meddling in politics.” On the other hand, attacks like these also provide an opportunity for NGOs to re-connect with more radical forms of citizen action like street protest: civil society often grows stronger when it is under pressure.

Ultimately, transformation means changing the deep structures of self and society that underpin all human institutions, and re-fashioning relationships on a different grounding of community and sharing instead of individual self-interest alone. And that is not something that can be achieved on the World Wide Web. Hence, experimenting with, and learning from, different ways of combining the best of ‘real’ and ‘virtual’ civil society organizing could be a key area moving forward. In this respect, networks like ‘Avaaz’ have much to offer. But NGOs don’t have to be social movements in order to be useful in reinvigorating civic action – they simply need to find a role that plays to their comparative advantages as the surrounding context continues to evolve. What might that mean in practice?

4. Building new bridges and connections

NGOs are often thought of as a “sector”, but in reality they and other civil society groups form part of an “ecosystem” of different elements and relationships. Like a natural ecosystem, civil society gains strength and sustenance through two things: one is diversity – so that all angles of a problem can be tackled, from service delivery to street protest; and

the other is connection, so that the whole can be more than the sum of its parts and synergies can be developed between one set of elements and another.

NGOs are ideally placed to be “connectors” in these ecosystems because of their “intermediary” status – the fact that they sit between different types and levels of social action. Some NGOs seem ashamed of the fact they are not grassroots groups, political parties or social movements, but mediating between different actors, geographies and approaches to social change is exactly what’s required as the landscape of transformation becomes more integrated, complex and diverse. All social movements benefit from specialist support, advice, funding and connections of the kind that intermediaries can bring to the table, so it is much better to build on the existing strengths of NGOs than to ignore or apologize for them.

It’s true that the position of NGOs is being challenged by the rise of more fluid social networks and less structured or “leaderless” organizations (think Occupy, for example, or websites like Kiva and Kickstarter) that may reduce the need for intermediaries to channel resources between one place and another and manage the processes involved, but this trend can be exaggerated. In fact I think the role of NGOs as connectors will grow in the future precisely because of the trend toward greater integration highlighted above. The best image I can think of is a “bridge of people”, the title of an old book about Oxfam-GB that was published in 1984. I like it because a “bridge” implies equality - resting on foundations that are equal at both ends - and reciprocity, since people and ideas cross over in both directions. [...]

No doubt in this panorama of possibilities NGOs will make many different choices, evolving along different pathways and occupying different positions in the ecosystems of social action that will develop in the future. But it also seems likely that a set of broader and more powerful global trends will pull and push NGOs further along the spectrum from deliverers of aid to vehicles for international cooperation, from North-South to local-global action, from development to transformation and from NGO dominance to a broader set of civil society relationships. Where this will end up is anybody’s guess. What’s for sure is that those NGOs that consciously think and argue their way through this terrain will be able to serve their missions more effectively in a future that may be very different to the present.

MICHAEL EDWARDS, is an independent writer and activist affiliated with the New York-based think-tank Demos, the global web magazine *Open Democracy*, and the Brooks World Poverty Institute at Manchester University in the United Kingdom. Mike’s writings have helped to shape a more critical appreciation of the global role of civil society, philanthropy and foreign aid; explore the integration of personal with social change; and break down barriers between researchers and activists across the world.

ENDNOTES

1 <http://www.oxfamblogs.org/fp2p/?p=11330>

GU Democracy & Governance Studies New Course Offering: Civil Society in Transitioning Countries and Emerging Democracies

BY HEBA F. EL-SHAZLI

Georgetown’s Center for Democracy and Civil Society (CDACS) offers a diverse lineup of course offerings related to Democracy and Governance Studies. In the spring 2013 semester, CDACS offered their newest class on civil society. Taught by Heba F. El-Shazli, the goal of the course is to impart students with a better understanding of the role of civil society and its organizations in transitioning countries and emerging democracies. Is civil society the panacea that will lead transitioning countries to democracy? Is it the entity that will “speak truth to power,” quoting Edward Said? This class helps explain competing definitions of what “civil society” actually is, and how to use these theoretical foundations to inform the study of the real-world challenges of democratic transitions.

In this course, students gain a deeper understanding of the origins of civil society, the evolution of civil society as the “third sector” between state and market, and its contemporary role in consolidating democracy and good governance. Students also examine case studies from around the world to reflect on the role of civil society in transitioning countries and the ever-changing relationship between state and civil society. Students have embarked on creative, interesting, and insightful research projects in this class, so I have selected the following three abstracts to share some of their excellent insights.

***Civil society’s role in peaceful democratic unification: a case study of Yemen and Germany*, by Kelsey Allagood.** This paper explores the roles of three key players in civil society in Germany and Yemen: women’s groups, youth, and religious organizations. Clearly, the political unifications of Germany and Yemen were quite different. Yet, the varying degrees of involvement of these groups in civil society seem to have made a critical difference in the peaceful — or more violent — reunifications. Civil society will not hold up if it is not supported by state and economic institutions. Holistic approaches to state and civil society formation, it seems, provide the greatest chance of success in the democratizing world.

***What Kind of Participation Can Local Governance Create? The Case of Uganda*, by Claire Robertson.** This paper explores the question of what kind of citizen participation local governments create and need. It examines arguments for and against decentralization and local governance in Uganda, and creates a rubric for gauging the level of participation present in a governing structure. While Uganda has pursued a decentralized government structure, it has not reached ideal levels of citizen participation and citizen power through this

process. Increasing the ability of citizens to advocate in the spaces provided for them is likely to create the greatest benefit for citizens in Uganda in the short-term.

***Finding Friends in Hostile Territory — Civil Society Strategies to Protect LGBT Rights in Africa*, by Kellen McClure.** This paper outlines the evolution of the LGBT movement in Africa, how the framing of LGBT issues has changed, and the various strategies and challenges these groups face. An analysis is presented of how LGBT groups in South Africa and Uganda were successful in securing the support and cooperation of civil society by reframing the narrative beyond LGBT rights to human rights more broadly. These case studies provide some hope that the polarization within civil society is not insurmountable.

To read excerpts of these students’ work, please visit the Democracy and Society online edition. Also included online is an analysis of civil society in the Balkans by **JoAnne Rogers**, a Georgetown MA student in Conflict Resolution. See the online edition at www.democracyandsociety.com

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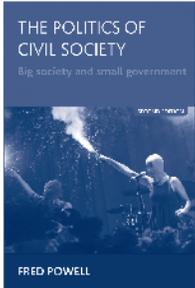


Book Reviews

Democracy & Society

■ *The Politics of Civil Society: Big society, small government? (Second Edition)* by Fred Powell, The Policy Press, 2013

REVIEW BY CAITLIN BROWN



The second edition of Fred Powell's *The Politics of Civil Society* seems to illustrate the observation he makes late in the book that civil society "can mean all things to all people". Indeed, Powell's exhaustive excavation of the term uncovers a multiplicity of narratives of civil society, demonstrating how it has been possible for actors of all political and ideological stripes to seize the concept as their own.

But what is more intriguing about the book is the argument that Powell begins to advance but ultimately leaves underdeveloped: the claim that even if civil society can *be* all things, it cannot *do* all things. In particular, Powell argues that irrespective of the ideological gloss it is given, civil society's function is to define and cultivate "civic virtue" and protect some sort of social welfare. This insight that civil society is self-consciously oriented towards the production of public virtue goes a long way to re-center civil society at the heart of democratic politics, even if Powell undermines his argument at points in the book.

There is a messiness to Powell's second edition, reflecting his drive to hear all voices participating in or commenting on civil society and desire to survey all major manifestations of voluntary, organized life outside of the state and the market, from Victorian-era charity associations to the identity-based New Social Movements. Although each chapter could easily stand alone, they are organized in a loose chronological order, tracing the historical development of civil society. In many ways, its messiness is the book's genius, as it vividly represents the inherent messiness of civil society itself, and not just "civil society" as a scholarly concept. Although Powell is thorough in his inclusion of scholarly debate surrounding the term, what matters most to him is that civil society is a real-life arena of contestation where individuals gather to sort out issues of citizenship, state-society relations, and the provision of welfare. Civil society, he suggests, is not the residual space at the margins of the state and the market, but the very heart of democracy. If it is messy, chaotic, and cacophonous, then that is because those features are inherent to democracy.

But Powell does evince some sort of order to the realm of civil society. A comprehensive and inclusive that he tries

to be in his treatment of civil society, there are some notable omissions. Nowhere to be found is a discussion of Putnam's paradigmatic bowling leagues, soccer clubs, and choral societies. Instead, Powell argues that civil society is strictly and directly political. It does not touch on politics through the side effect of the creation of social capital; rather, it expressly orients and addresses itself to political questions. He offers what he calls a "metanarrative of civil society", which traces history from the ancient Greek to postmodern "civilizations", identifying distinct systems of interconnected forms of civil society, political formations, welfare models, and civic virtue. Powell argues that the continuing goal of civil society is to define and promote "civic virtue", a term he never quite defines but which seems to encapsulate ideas about the responsibilities of good citizens and states, especially as they relate to public welfare. Thus, although groups within civil society may have different conceptualizations of civic virtue, these conceptualizations are what animate their work and mark them as members of civil society. In this sense, Powell differs from scholars who see civil society as value-producing, in which citizens' acts of voluntary association create values like trust and reciprocity. For him, civil society is value-driven, in that citizens associate with one another based on their understandings of and commitments to certain values and virtues.

Powell's contention that civil society is self-consciously oriented towards the production of civic virtue speaks both to the importance and agency of civil society within politics. And yet Powell is not willing to accord civil society such an activist role when the brand of civic virtue it advocates is morally reprehensible. In his otherwise well-researched chapter on civil society in Nazi Germany, he argues that civil society lost its "ethical compass" and thus was able to be completely co-opted into the apparatus of the totalitarian state. Co-optation, however, suggests a change in purpose, and while the prevailing understanding of "civic virtue" may have been radically different during the Nazi era, it was, as before the Nazi takeover of the German state, still the reserve of civil society. By using civil society organizations to advance their ideology of the good German citizen, the Nazis demonstrated that they precisely understood Powell's conception of civil society's political purpose and power. To suggest that civil society lost its agency during the Nazi reign is dangerous because it absolves civil society of responsibility for the propagation of any "bad" values and understandings of civic virtue. It undermines Powell's point that as the ultimate democratic arena, civil society is open to all, including those with abhorrent views and those whose values resonate with the ideology of the state. In fact, if civil society is tightly intertwined with the form of government

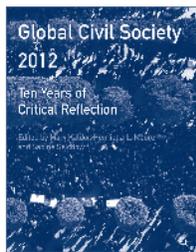
and its welfare model, as Powell argues in his metanarrative of civil society, then its most powerful voices should align with the ideology of the state. Powell's arguments about civil society serving as the champion of civic virtue would have been strengthened if he had contended that rather than vanishing in Nazi Germany, civil society thrived.

Fred Powell's second edition of *The Politics of Civil Society* will serve as a valuable resource to anyone looking for a comprehensive survey of the history of civil society. For those unconvinced with idea of civil society as a residual category, encompassing any form of organization outside the state and the market, Powell also provides a potentially useful starting-point for distinguishing among these non-state, non-market entities. While he does not entirely succeed in arguing that civil society is defined by its function of cultivating civic virtue, he does provide much of the groundwork for other scholars to do so in the future.

CAITLIN BROWN is a Ph.D. Candidate at the Georgetown University Department of Government.

■ *Global Civil Society 2012: Ten Years of Critical Reflection* by Mary Kaldor, Henrietta Moore and Sabine Selchow, Palgrave Macmillan, 2012

REVIEW BY MATTHEW ECKEL



In 2001, reflecting an expanding scholarly interest in the globalization of social and political activism, Anheier, Glasius, and Kaldor published the first *Global Civil Society Yearbook*. They set out “to analyze and describe, to map both conceptually and empirically, what we [social scientists] mean when we talk about ‘global civil society.’”¹ In the decade since, these annual volumes have been an important resource for keeping scholars abreast of transnational civil society and social movements. *Global Civil Society 2012* represents the tenth volume in the series, and introduces new editors in Henrietta Moore and Sabine Selchow, in addition to Mary Kaldor. It provides important insight into global civic organizations, networks and events. Despite some flaws, including a lack of attention to civil society's less-than-civil manifestations, the book is an excellent resource for students and scholars alike.

As an anniversary edition, the latest volume acts as both a yearbook analyzing (relatively) current events and as a retrospective project. It has much to offer in both roles, with some contributors providing historical pieces and others restricting their focus to 2011. Kaldor and her former co-editors Anheier and Glasius do a bit of both with their

introductory chapter, examining 2011's most visible protest movements — Occupy Wall Street, the *indignados* in Spain, and of course the Arab Spring — in light of the past ten years of global activism. Her current co-editors Moore and Selchow offer a conceptual reanalysis of the role of globalization and the internet, arguing that the frequent distinction between online and offline activity obscures more than it illuminates, and that the internet is better thought of as “a process of becoming” than as a tool or space for activism.

The remaining chapters present an eclectic mix of global civil society's manifestations, loosely organized under the headings of Democracy and Citizenship, Peace and Justice, and Economy and Society. Shorter 1-2 page ‘boxes’ from other scholars are interspersed within the main chapters, giving additional context or providing related-but-tangential information. The result is an impressionistic but wide-ranging picture of recent global civil society.

Kaldor gives a particularly compelling retrospective on ten years of global activism on military intervention, chronicling how the Global War on Terror fractured the 1990s-era consensus around intervention, igniting debates about the pitfalls of “militarized humanitarianism” and the merits of Responsibility to Protect. Kóczé and Rövid's contribution on the development of pro-Roma civil society is equally notable for its nuanced analysis both of movement successes as well as the emerging divides between cosmopolitan “frequent flyer” movement elites and the daily lived experience of most Roma. Students interested in movement organizing and infrastructure will find much in Geoffrey Pleyers' chapter examining ten years of World Social Forums. His discussion of the inherent tension between movement institutionalization and grassroots vitality should draw sympathetic nods from any readers who have analyzed or worked in these spaces. For students and scholars, Stares, Deel and Timms' overview of strategies for measuring civil society provides an excellent methodological reference point.

One obvious pitfall of the yearbook format is the tendency of events to outpace analysis. The discussion of the Arab Spring, both in the introduction and in Bernard Dreano's stand-alone chapter, reflect the optimism of the uprisings' early months. They emphasize the non-violent, democratic and even liberal character of the region's anti-authoritarian movements, marveling at their capacity to face violence from the state without responding in kind. The subsequent sectarian bloodletting in Syria, military crackdown in Egypt, and ongoing violence in Libya and Tunisia give these passages unintentionally grim subtext today. As a snapshot of the early stages of a revolution, however, both chapters have much to offer.

More noticeably absent is any extended discussion of less emancipatory global civic practice. 2011 was indeed the year of Tahrir Square, Occupy Wall Street and anti-austerity protests. It was also the year of Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya, the Tea Party, Golden Dawn, and Bulgarian anti-Roma marches. The book treats these instantiations of ‘uncivil’ society peripherally, if at all. This has been a fairly consistent choice throughout

the *Yearbook* series, and previous editions have provided something of a justification. Though the series has consistently avoided offering a concrete definition of what counts as global civil society, Kaldor and Muro argued in 2003 that the concept necessarily has “normative content”, and is “based on an assumption of human equality”.² Extremist, violent or exclusionary groups thus fit uncomfortably into this framework. That said, given the undeniable political significance of many exclusionary and ‘uncivil’ groups operating within the public square, and given their structural similarity to many of the organizations discussed in the *Yearbook* volumes, to minimize their role seems arbitrary.

Indeed, they earn only occasional mention in the current volume, and seldom with enough information or context to be meaningful in light of the theoretical arguments developed elsewhere. Saltman and Szarvas’s contribution on transnational civil society in Hungary, for example, discusses the satirical anti-fascist Hungarian Garlic Movement, but includes nothing about the surging right-wing paramilitary activity that prompted its creation. Renjie Butalid’s brief contribution on European far-right parties is welcome, but provides no analysis beyond electoral returns, and says little about the parties’ basis in civil society or transnational reach. The Tea Party earns only a brief mention in the introductory chapter, and one which downplays the substantial civic activism and organization that undergird it as a movement.³

These gaps aside, the book provides a useful overview of globalized civic practice. It would make an excellent companion text for a course on transnational civic activism, as well as providing a useful reference for scholars of civil society. *Global Civil Society 2012* represents a worthy addition to an important series, and testifies to its continued vitality.

MATTHEW ECKEL is a doctoral student in comparative politics at Georgetown University.

ENDNOTES

1 Kaldor, M., Anheier, H., Glasius, M. (eds.) (2001) *Global Civil Society 2001*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

2 Kaldor and Muro in Kaldor, M., Anheier, H., Glasius, M. (eds.) (2003) *Global Civil Society 2003*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

3 See for example: Skocpol, T., & Williamson, V. (2012). *The Tea Party and the remaking of Republican conservatism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

■ *Development Aid Confronts Politics: The almost Revolution* by Thomas Carothers and Diane de Gramont, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2013

REVIEW BY MANUEL MERA



In *Development Aid Confronts Politics* Thomas Carothers and Diane de Gramont present an effort to boost the use of politically smart strategies in development aid implementation. This work is part of a growing movement within the aid community that emerged in the 1990s and has become the new paradigm. With this in mind, the authors want to highlight the benefits of politically

savvy development strategies and insist on the need to overcome existing technocratic barriers in aid organizations. The fact that the book is edited by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, a policy think tank with presence in several major capitals around the world, reflects the type of audiences that the book aims for: decision makers and practitioners in aid organizations. Carothers and de Gramont simplify the already smooth reading of the book by incorporating summary boxes and nutshell conclusions aimed for busy decision makers and impatient readers. Thus, the book is not designed to be an academic reading but rather a very well developed attempt to influence the political agenda on developmental aid.

Developmental aid is already political. Donors have always used foreign aid with political objectives such as benefiting friendly countries, rewarding allies or winning over impervious leaders. Carothers and de Gramont warn us that while allocation of resources is political, the strategic implementations have remained technical and apolitical, and for this reason, inefficient. “Programs with clearly political goals can and often are conducted using technocratic methods that do not reflect a deep understanding of the political context or any real attempt to facilitate locally driven processes of change” (2). In their view, aid should pursue political goals, such as advancing democratic governance, and should employ politically smart methods, moving away from technocratic approaches. This is the message that the authors want to transmit and that is repeated over and over across the nine chapters of the book. It is first presented in the context of reviewing the history of aid policies, and then developed further when the authors propose solutions to the current state of affairs.

Carothers and de Gramont draw from official documents and conversations with aid practitioners to describe the evolution of development aid, stress the benefits of political strategies and propose further actions to consolidate a new model. Chapters 2 to 5 describe the historical evolution of developmental aid from the early decades of aid assistance until the first decade of the millennium. Starting in the

1950s and 1960s, the aid community focused on economic goals, trying to stimulate growth in the Third World as part of their modernization objective. The efforts toward “well-targeted” modernization policies continued until the early 1970s when its inefficiency became clear. The aid community then shifted toward a “human needs” agenda, and in the 1980s it shifted again toward neoliberalism. But what is stressed by the authors is that these four decades were characterized by an underlying apolitical impulse. The technocratic consensus was finally broken in the 1990s as it became clear that developmental policies failed, among other things, due to weak state capacity, corruption, and inadequate legal protection. A group of aid practitioners began to move toward more politically informed strategies, but have found resilient opposition within aid organizations. It is in this emerging group that Carothers and de Gramont position themselves and try to make an argument for overcoming barriers in the field and deepening the political methodology. Proponents of the political approach are still struggling to gain a secure foothold for their ideas within their own organizations. The authors argue that pushback comes from concerns about higher administrative costs, less definite outcomes and more controversy that might emerge when introducing political methods.

In the last three chapters, Carothers and de Gramont focus on the current affairs of development aid implementation and develop their recipe for a more politically oriented strategy. While several examples of politically savvy initiatives are presented, these are not ideal examples but important attempts in the right direction. The underperformance of development aid strategies in the past seems to be the strongest support for their argument, as they admit that attempting to ascertain in any systematic way how political approaches have affected programming is elusive. The authors summarize the new political movement into several recommendations, such as starting programming from local political context, making flexible the processes of change, and linking aid to an informed theory of political change.

In the final chapter the authors go further in their venture and propose an agenda for succeeding in their objective of influencing policymakers. They propose a set of goals that aid organizations should put forward and several methods to achieve these goals. While general in their scope, the authors’ proposals aim at the variety of aid organizations that have been unevenly influenced by the new political strategy. Distributing spending more in line with political needs, integrating democracy and governance into programming, investing in staff training in political programming, and engaging with a wider range of people in aid-receiving countries are just some of the recommendations the authors propose.

The move toward politically smart development aid is still unfolding and Carothers and de Gramont’s book wants to contribute to that cause. “We believe that adopting political methods and goals aimed at making aid more effective is a valuable trend. The movement to renovate development aid by fully taking onboard political thinking and action

is crucial to the future of the endeavor” (14). The book is targeted toward practitioners of the aid community, but is nonetheless a valuable work for a broader audience that is interested in the evolution of developmental policies and the internal evolution of decision making of aid organizations.

MANUEL MERA is a Ph.D. candidate at the Georgetown University Department of Government.

Center Highlights

❖ On March 21, 2013 CDACS welcomed Cuban bloggers **Yoani Sánchez** and **Orlando Luis Lardo Lazo** at an event titled “Cuba and the Digital Revolution.” The event was coordinated with the Association for the Study of Cuban Economy. Both Sánchez and Lazo maintain active blogs, *Lunes de Post-Revolución* and *Generación Y* respectively. Sánchez’s blog has an audience of over 450,000 followers, and she has won awards for her support of free expression from *Time Magazine*, *Foreign Policy*, and *Columbia University*.

❖ Between March 17-23, 2013 **Prof. Daniel Brumberg** and CDACS welcomed a delegation of eight Tunisian scholars to Georgetown to begin an initiative to develop a program for democracy and governance studies at the University of Tunis. The program was co-sponsored by the United States Institute of Peace (USIP) and the Project on Middle East Democracy (POMED). During their week stay, members of the Georgetown faculty presented about their courses in democracy studies and held discussions about developing curricula. In June 2013 Prof. Brumberg made a follow-up visit to continue the program. More can be learned at <http://government.georgetown.edu/cdacs/projects/Tunisia/>

❖ In August 2013 Executive Director **Barak Hoffman** left the Center for Democracy and Civil Society for a full time position at the World Bank. Barak has been an integral part of CDACS for the past six years and a core faculty in the MA Program in Democracy and Governance. Barak taught classes on research design, political institutions, the political economy of reform, and democracy and governance in sub-Saharan Africa. CDACS also welcomed new Interim Director, **Yonatan L. Morse**. Yonatan comes to CDACS from Georgetown’s Ph.D. Program in Government, and specializes in issues related to elections, hybrid regimes, and political parties in sub-Saharan Africa.

❖ The M.A. program in Democracy and Governance welcomed new adjunct faculty member **Heba El-Shazli**. Heba has 28 years of experience with civic and union organizing, institution building, leadership skills training, and labor education and training.

❖ On November 4, 2013 Adjunct Professor and President of Democracy International **Eric Bjornlund** spoke to students at a lunch event sponsored by CDACS titled “Elections in South Sudan: Democracy International’s Programming.” The event was to discuss the recent \$77 million cooperative agreement signed between Democracy International and USAID to implement the Systems to Uphold the Credibility and Constitutionality of Elections in South Sudan (SUCCESS).

❖ On November 8, 2013 CDACS and the MA Program in Democracy and Governance hosted its annual career panel. Guests this year included World Bank transparency expert and former CDACS Executive Director **Barak Hoffman**, the State Department’s Iran Program Director **Danika Walters**, IRI Assistant Evaluation Officer **Dylan Diggs** (10’) and World Bank transparency specialist **Marcelo Buitran** (11’).

Faculty Awards and Publications

Daniel Brumberg (Co-Director, CDACS) authored “Transforming the Arab World’s Protection-Racket Politics” in the *Journal of Democracy* (July 2013, Volume 24, No. 3).

Steven Heydemann (Adjunct Professor, USIP) authored “Syria and the Future of Authoritarianism” in the *Journal of Democracy* (October 2013, Volume 23, No. 4).

Daniel Brumberg and Steven Heydemann co-authored a monograph for the Wilson Center titled *Global Authoritarians and the Arab Spring: New Challenges for U.S. Diplomacy*.

Yonatan Morse (Associate Director, CDACS) published an article titled, “Party Matters: The Institutional Origins of Competitiveness and Hegemony in Tanzania” in the journal *Democratization* (February 2013).

Jeffrey Fischer (Adjunct Professor, Creative Associates) co-authored with **Patrick W. Quirk** (Creative Associates) a handbook for the United States Agency for International Development titled *Best Practices in Electoral Security—A Guide for Democracy and Governance Programming*.

Student and Alumni News

The program contributed funds for summer research to **Tipping Ellis** for attending the CCT Summer Abroad Session on “Trade and the Global Information Economy” in Geneva, Switzerland and to **Weiyi Wang** for a six month internship in Cambodia.

Call for Papers

“Democracy & Society” Volume 11, Issue 2

We are seeking well-written, interesting submissions of 1,500 – 2,000 words on the themes below, including new publications, summaries, excerpts of recently completed research, and works in progress. Submissions for this issue will be due on **March 9, 2013**.

Ten Years of CDACS: The State of Democracy and Democracy Studies

2014 is a watershed year for both CDACS and the study of democracy. On the one hand CDACS celebrates its 10th year anniversary. On the other hand it is now 40 years since the Carnation Revolution and the beginning of the Third Wave of democratization. This issue of *Democracy and Governance* invites scholars, practitioners, and students to share analysis, advice, and lessons-learned about the state of democracy and democracy studies. What have we learned about democracy and governance over the past 40 years? What has surprised us and what lessons were possibly missed? What new puzzles do scholars of democracy still need to address and what analytical tools might they use? Has the field of democracy studies coincided with the needs of practitioners on the ground and how might we improve to address 21st century concerns?

Please visit, democracyandsociety.com for further details on this call for papers.



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