Associations and Democracy in Romania

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Democratic effects of CIVIC ENGAGEMENT: Lessons from Eastern Europe

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There is a large agreement that the revolutions of 1989 were, to a large extent, the result of massive citizens' protests, and that civil society groups played a very significant role in triggering and organizing them[1]. Then, during the early 2000s, a new wave of revolutions has spread to a group of more culturally and geographically diverse polities from, Slovakia in Central Europe to Croatia and Serbia in the Balkans, from Georgia in the Caucasus to Ukraine in the Western CIS and finally to Kyrgyzstan in Central Asia. This sequence of democratic breakthroughs in postcommunist Eurasia, often referred to as color revolutions, not only has raised expectations that a contagious spread of democratic impulses will give rise to further democratic development, but brought further support to the idea that civil society can play a significant role in spurring democratization.

The beginning of 2011 has witnessed the overthrow of Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali's repressive regime in Tunisia, of Hosni Mubarak in Egypt, and, as this book goes to press, people demonstrate against authoritarian regimes in Algeria, Yemen, Libya, Jordan and Bahrain. Is this the beginning of

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1   One of the notable exceptions is Stephen Kotkin, "Uncivil Society: 1989 and the Implosion of the Communist Establishment" (New York: Modern Library Chronicles, 2009).

another wave of democratization where civil society groups played a catalytic role?

Whereas the success of these budding revolutions remains to be seen, the 1989 revolutions can give us some clues about the longer term effect of civic groups' protests on democratic consolidation and sustainability. By merging the experience of the East and Central Europe and the former Soviet Union, with that of Latin America and southern Europe, Valerie Bunce finds in a 2003 study that the crucial variable in predicting outcomes of transition is the level of uncertainty as it is perceived at its beginning. Transition was far more uncertain where the military was engaged in the transition, or where mass mobilization focused on leaving the state but not building democracy. When uncertainty was higher, the best result was a compromised democracy, capitalism, and state. As a result, while the most successful transitions in the South involved bridging, the most successful transitions in the East involved breakage. This is largely because when uncertainty is low, mass mobilization can further reduce it, thereby influencing the preferences of those who rule, as well as the division of power between them and the opposition (Bunce 2003).

In addition to playing a role in bringing down authoritarian regimes, citizen involvement in civil society organizations has been associated with several other conditions that are said to "make democracy work." Volunteering is expected to have at least three significant pro-democratic effects on participants and, by aggregation, on the environment in which they act.

Firstly, through group activity, a process of social learning takes place which enhance those attitudes, knowledge and skills on which democratic practices are based.[2] The

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2   See, for instance, Robert D. Putnam, "Bowling Alone: America's Declining Social Capital", *Journal of Democracy*, 6 (1995): 65-78; and Martin Hooghe, "Voluntary Associations and Social Capital. An Empirical, Survey-Based Test of the Putnam Hypothesis."

remarkably complex individual level relationship between volunteering and pro-democratic attitudes has been well documented among Western societies. Across a large number of studies, individuals who are members of associations tend to be more interested in politics, better informed and to be more often involved in acts of political participation than people who are not members of such associations.[3] Additionally, being active in civil society increases the sense that individuals *can* influence political processes.[4] As individuals become more acquainted with the democratic process, they gain more confidence, which makes them more effective advocates of interests. Group activity is found also to promote higher levels of generalized social trust of participants, whereas increased trust generates higher levels of social capital reflecting an extended sense of "social connectedness" within the community.[5] This, in turn, serves to "soften the edges" of social conflict.[6]

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(Paper presented at the 1999 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association.)

3   See, for instance, Robert E. Lane, *Political Life: Why and How People Get Involved in Politics* (New York: Free Press, 1959), 74-79; Phillip H. Pollack, "Organizations as Mobilizing Agents: How Does Group Activity Affect Political Participation", *American Journal of Political Science* 26 (August 1982): 485-503; Sidney Verba and Norman H. Nie, *Participation in America: Political Democracy and Social Equality* (New York: Harper & Row, 1972); and Sidney Verba, Kay L. Schlozman, Henry E. Brady, *Voice and Equality: Civic Volunteerism in American Politics* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995).

4   See for instance, Verba et al, *Voice and Equality*; and Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba, *Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966), Ch. 7.

5   Nancy L. Rosenblum, *Membership and Morals* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998).

6   Eric M. Uslaner, "Producing and Consuming Trust," *Political Science Quarterly*, 115 (December 2000): 569-590; Uslaner, *The Moral Foundations of Trust*.

The social learning role of associations has been particularly salient in the case of the new democracies from the East. In Romania, as well as in the most of the ex-communist countries more broadly, civil society structures were able to develop freely only after 1989, as communist regimes in the region did not allow autonomous voluntary organizations to exist. The members of the newly formed groups gained new skills, such as creating and developing sustainable and independent organizations, making strategic plans and building partnerships, fundraising from domestic and foreign sources and recruiting volunteers. As leading members of the democracy assistance programs put it, civil society organizations aimed to become "schools of democracy" for independent and active citizens, "who associated the new democratic state with the decentralization of power, the rule of law, the protection of human rights, media freedom and independence and justice" (Demes and Forbrig 2008, p. 175). Financial support was mobilized on a massive scale by private foundations and public agencies in Europe and North America, supporting a large spectrum of activities from humanitarian, social, educational, environmental and cultural projects to politically more sensitive advocacy activities in fields such as human and minority rights, the fight against corruption and monitoring of government agencies and political actors[7]. (Demes and Forbrig 2008, p. 176).

Secondly, civic activism impacts positively on the public arena because associations support "the social infrastructure of public spheres that develop agendas, test ideas, embody deliberations, and provide voice." (Warren 2001).[8] The extent that civic groups were encouraged to embrace this

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7   There is a growing literature on democracy assistance. See, for instance, Carl Gershman (2006), Thomas Carothers (1999), Youngs (2006)

8   Mark E. Warren, *Democracy and Association* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001) 61.

new role has varied across excommunist polities and activity domain. This was easiest in certain areas, such as social welfare, education, leisure, charity, and not too difficult in environmental protection and the preservation of cultural heritage. In other fields, however, organizations' public stances challenging public policy, aiming at the control of political and economic power or expressing critical positions towards government and political actors found it more difficult to establish legitimacy in the eyes of the public and the governing elites (Demes and Forbrig 2008, p. 177).

Finally, voluntary associations improve representation in the political system, and thus strengthen political institutions, by giving voice to people and articulating interests to political leaders[9].

However, the general idea that participation in association is a resource for democratization has not escaped forceful criticism, asking, at the minimum, for a more precise contextualization of this causal mechanism. Some scholars doubt whether civil society is indeed "nothing short of an infallible democratic miracle worker" (Encarnacion 2004: 14), whereas other go as far as to doubt the existence of any positive effect of volunteer groups. Their critiques come from a diverse array of perspectives.

Firstly, both the role of civic groups in collapse of authoritarian regimes and the possibility of replicating it in the future were questioned. Many scholars and policy makers considered the so called "color revolutions" in Slovakia, Croatia, Serbia, Georgia and Ukraine, to be a new phenomenon, the "NGO revolution". According to Ivan Krastev, the concept of civil society was "as fundamental to the color revolutions as the concept of the "third estate"

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9   Gerhard Lehmbruch and Philippe C. Schmitter, *Patterns of Corporatist Policy-Making* (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage, 1982)

was for the French revolution" and as important for their success as the role played by the Bolshevik party in the success of the 1917 revolution in Russia (Krastev 2008, p. 239). And, as Sergei Markov, a senior political scientist who is close to Vladimir Putin, put it, "everybody who wants to take part in the politics of the 21st century has to create his own networks of NGOs and supply them with ideology, money and people"[10]. In other words, NGOs have started to be seen as significant actors of political change, at least as important as political parties, trade unions or charismatic political leaders.

At the same time, there is a growing number of recent comparative studies showing that civic groups are neither a panacea for authoritarian regimes' ills nor a universal tool for democratic import. In addition to development of the NGO sector, Taras Kuzio identifies ten causal factors that contributed to the democratic breakthroughs in Slovakia, Croatia, Serbia, Georgia and Ukraine, and argues that the absence of all or some of these factors will prevent successful democratic revolutions from taking place elsewhere in the post-Soviet space. The favorable conditions include a competitive authoritarian state facilitating space for the democratic opposition, "return to Europe" civic nationalism that assists in civil society's mobilization, a preceding political crisis, a pro-democratic capital city, unpopular ruling elites, a charismatic candidate, a united opposition, youth politics, regionalism and foreign intervention[11] (Kuzio 2008, p. 226).

Secondly, associations are asserted to provide unequal representation. The critiques claim that civic groups provide voice to citizens but in a distorted way, which contravene

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10 Quoted in Krastev (2008, p. 239)

11 The two last factors have been shown to have both hindered and supported democratic breakthroughs, depending on the country in question and the foreign actor.

to the democratic ideal of political equality. Activists in associations tend to belong disproportionately to more advantaged groups and, in consequence, the needs, and priorities they express may give unequal consideration for the needs and orientations of all citizens (Verba 2003, Verba et al. 1995, Skocpol 1999, Olson 1982).

Thirdly, the claim that associations influence pro-democratic values and norms is questioned. This is because people tend to spend only very limited time in civic groups, and people they meet there are like themselves. In addition, many authors argue that values that matter most for democratic culture, like social trust and tolerance, are largely shaped during early childhood and are very resistant to change during adult life.

Finally, another critique stems from the fact that imported associations are different to the "naturally grown" ones. Some scholars believe that in the Balkan and the former soviet countries, and, at least at some extent, in the other former authoritarian countries, associations are of a different nature, having both determinants and effects that are not common within Western societies (e.g. Kalb 2002). Allegedly, these differences came from the fact that the associations that were set up and their functioning is based on the help of international organisations tend to have only weak connections to local communities, and motivations of the local people to participate in them differ to those for the "natural grown" groups (Sampson 1996). As a result, they tend to have only few volunteers and people motivated by common interest. In addition, in many cases the grass-roots associations belong to the "uncivil society" (e.g. skinheads, Serbian Resistance Movement (SPOT), Slovak National Movement). Moreover, Russia and other countries, have undertaken a significant effort to criminalize pro-democracy NGOs, on the one hand, and to promote

a government friendly third sector. In 2005, the Russian parliament established its own funding program for "civil society" groups both in Russia and abroad. Among the groups created to provide active support to the government these groups, probable the most notable is Nashi, The Youth Democratic Anti-Fascist Movement, which has between 100,000 and 200,000 members aged between 17 and 25. A similar role has been assumed by the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, comprising China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan (with observers including Belarus and Iran). The regional economic and security cooperation group redefined itself as an instrument of collective defense against the spread of "unwanted" political and economic influence on the region (also protecting it from foreign "meddling" on issues of human rights protection) (Silitski 2008, p. 170).

These results are consistent with those of previous analyses that found that political variables are by far the most relevant predictors of democratization success. In comparing countries from Latin America and Middle East, Mehran Kamrava and Frank Mora show that the links between associations and democracy are complex, and positive only under certain conditions. They find that whether or not civil society organizations can emerge and act as agents of democratization depends on diverse contextual factors, such as class composition and the nature of economic development, specific societal characteristics and cultural preferences, and the pursuit of certain state policies (Kamrava and Mora 1998).

Sheri Berman's study of the Weimar Republic shows that a dense and vibrant associational life did not prevent Germany's democratic regime slide into Fascism (Berman 1997). Similarly, Hajdeja Iglic finds that Milosevic regime was not hampered by the numerous Serb associations

(Iglic 2003), whereas Omar Encarnacion argues that some of the nations in possession of the densest civil societies in the nineteen century found it most difficult to develop effective institutions in the twentieth century, while some of the countries with an acute civil society deficit underwent successful democratic transitions (Encarnacion 2003). Encarnacion's main conclusion is that "democratic consolidation depends for its success upon efficient and stable political institutions rather than vibrant and robust civil societies. At best, civil society plays an auxiliary role in the consolidation of democracy that consists primarily of supplementing the work of political institutions" (p.9).

In a recent article published in the Washington Post, Larry Diamond, one of the leading scholars of civil society and democratization studies, presents a list of advices to the reformers in the Arab countries on how to build the new political institutions for a successful democratic transition. The first one is to unite the democratic opposition: "When a dictatorship is on the ropes, one thing that can rescue it is a divided opposition." The second advice uses Romanian case as a negative example: "Make sure the old order really is gone. [...] Fallen dictators often leave behind robust political and security machines. No autocrat in modern times met a more immediate fate than Romania's Nicolae Ceausescu, who was executed by a firing squad of his own soldiers in 1989 just three days after a popular revolution forced him to flee the capital. Yet his successor, Ion Iliescu, was a corrupt former communist who obstructed political reform." Another lesson is to rewrite the rules, by drawing a new constitution. Finally, the extremes should be isolated, since "fragile democracies become stable when people who once had no use for democracy embrace it as the only game in town." (Diamond 2011)

Level of civic engagement in Romania

Any comprehensive evaluation of the roles played by activism in Romania has to take into account the number of volunteers, intensity of civic engagement, and change over time. Cross-national data, such as the World/European Values Surveys, indicate that considerable variance exists among countries in terms of the percentage of people who are volunteers in organizations. However, when we aggregate Western and excommunist country levels, a wide and non-decreasing gap appears (Badescu 2007). Among Western European cases, an average of 44% percent of citizens belong to at least one voluntary association in the 1994-1999 wave of surveys, compared to 18.9 percent among the post-communist cases in the same wave. In 2005-2006, the proportions are 50.7% in the West, compared to 20.7% in the East (Table 1). With 11.7%, Romania is below the average proportion of volunteers among the post-communist countries.

Table 1. Percent of people who declare that belong to at least one association. 1994-1999 and 2005-2006 World/European Values Surveys.

Wave		Type of country	
		W Europe	Excommunist
1994-1999	% volunteers	44.2%	18.9%
2005-2006	% volunteers	50.7%	20.7%

The direction of change over time is less clear in these cross-national data, since countries are not all the same across the two waves. Such change can be better assessed in the case of Romania by using a series of 12 national surveys (Figure 1). The results indicate that no significant increase took during the almost ten years period covered by these surveys. Furthermore, the average for the last five surveys is with 3.5% lower than the average for the previous ones.

Figure 1. Percent of the Romanian respondents who declare that belong to at least one association. 2000-2009 (2000-2007 Romanian Public Opinion Barometers surveys, 2009 ASG)
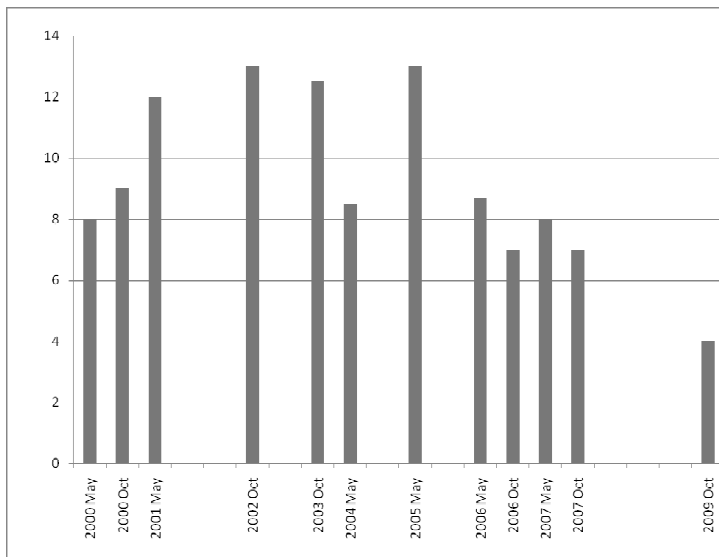
What about the effect of generational change on volunteering? There are several findings showing that in the West younger and older people tend to be less involved in participatory acts. This is attributed to the physical hindrances of older people and the high "mobility" of the young people that makes them less engaged (Curtis et al. 1992, Verba and Nie, 1972). Nevertheless, in East, age may not have the same effects as in Western democracies, precisely because of the dramatic change brought about by the collapse of communism (Bernhagen and Marsh, 2007). A growing proportion of volunteers among the youth over time could be a first sign of an increase in civic engagement across entire population. However, as data represented in Table 2 show, there is no such tendency among the Romanian youth. Whereas in the first five surveys the proportions of volunteers among the 18-25 and 26-30 are above 10% in four surveys,

in all of the last five surveys the corresponding proportions are less than 10%. Compared to other age categories, young Romanians tend to volunteer less often than middle age people, and often then older people.

Table 2. Percent of the Romanian respondents who declare that belong to at least one association across six age categories. 2000-2009 (2000-2007 Romanian Public Opinion Barometers surveys, 2009 ASG)

		Age category					
		18-25	26-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	>60
survey	2000 May	7.9%	8.8%	12.3%	8.0%	6.9%	4.3%
	2000 Oct	10.6%	11.5%	13.7%	12.5%	3.7%	3.2%
	2001 May	11.0%	11.5%	18.2%	15.7%	12.4%	4.0%
	2002 Oct	10.0%	15.4%	17.9%	19.0%	9.5%	6.6%
	2003 Oct	12.5%	12.1%	15.3%	18.0%	13.2%	5.6%
	2004 May	9.0%	10.2%	10.8%	9.6%	6.1%	5.3%
	2005 May	16.4%	11.1%	14.6%	14.4%	13.8%	8.6%
	2006 May	9.1%	9.6%	14.9%	12.4%	5.9%	2.8%
	2006 Oct	6.7%	7.8%	12.2%	6.5%	5.8%	4.7%
	2007 May	8.9%	8.6%	10.7%	7.7%	7.7%	4.2%
	2007 Oct	6.4%	8.5%	9.7%	8.3%	6.8%	3.4%
	2009 Oct	2.0%	2.0%	10.0%	8.7%	7.0%	2.1%
Total		9.2%	9.7%	13.4%	11.7%	8.2%	4.6%

How important is civic engagement for the Romanian democracy?

It is possible that group members do not differ from the general public in terms of attitudes or disposition toward democracy but that association membership still produces its pro-democratic effects. However, if volunteers tend to have more often pro-democratic attitudes and to be more politically active then we would expect that associational involvement further enhances the pro-democratic role of associations. Evidence from consolidated democracies suggests that association members are more likely than non-

members to carry attributes that are generally associated with the ideal type of democratic citizen.[12]

A research by Gabriel Badescu, Eric Uslaner and Paul Sum comparing the samples of the general public through national surveys with the samples of members in associations through organizational surveys in Romania and the Republic of Moldova finds general support to the fact that volunteers tend to be better democrats than the general public. In Romania, the most active members of organizations are more trusting of other people than are the general public. Additionally, volunteers especially those who are highly active, are also more tolerant. They are more likely to support the right of minorities and unpopular groups to hold public meetings and would be more tolerant of these groups as neighbors. Volunteers have a greater sense of their own political competence, though they do not necessarily see politicians as more responsive relative to the general population. The highest levels of participation and efficacy (feeling that you have something to tell politicians and that you can influence politicians) all come from activists who are the most involved in decision-making in their organizations. Activists participate more frequently and have greater interest, but the key to believing that you can make a difference is not just taking part, but getting involved in the nuts and bolts of your organization. However, the sense that you can make a difference (internal efficacy; cf. Rosenstone and Hansen[13]) does not translate into the belief that anyone is listening (external efficacy), since the volunteers are no more likely than the general public to believe that politicians care what people think.

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12 Mark Warren, "Civil Society and Good Governance," (Report prepared for The Civil Society and Governance Programme, http://www.democracycollaborative.org/publications/Warren_csgg.pdf)

13 Rosenstone and Hansen, *Mobilization*, 144, 271, 280.

Additionally, my analysis on the 2008 Romanian youth data finds that group members tend to be more often involved in political participation acts, to be more interested in politics and better informed. However, they do not differ in terms of political tolerance and social trust is higher only among the oldest high school students (18-19 years), and not different among the others. It is also that only among the oldest students volunteers have a higher tendency to see good citizenship in terms of volunteering, voting and protesting against an unjust law.

In conclusion, volunteering continues to be low in the former communist countries, and particularly in Romania. Existing associations continues to have only a short life span and little expertise and interest in attracting volunteers[14]. Lack of money, time and skills offer a partial explanation for the difference between East and West. At least as important, the process of learning the personal and social value of volunteering has been slow due to the high importance of socialization through family, coupled to the fact that very few of the Romanian adolescents grow up in families where at least one parent is active in associations. Finally, but at least as important, civic involvement depends on development of the nonprofit sector, which in turn, is strongly affected by the level of state support. State funding is decisive, yet extremely feeble, in the current context, in which the EU accession of Romania has been accompanied by a decrease of the traditional international funding for NGOs, whereas the newly available European Union Structural Funds requires a level a level of human resources and financial sources beyond the capacity of most of the small and medium organizations.

Additionally, the fact that the Romanian Orthodox Church, to which more than 80% of the population belongs,

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14 See for instance, Rigman (2009), Badescu, Uslaner and Sum (2004).

has not been able to tap its full potential as a source for civic activism in Romania, as Wolfgang Stuppert argue in the chapter 5 in this volume, is another significant reason for the slow development of civil society in the country.

Is low level of civic engagement a problem for development of the Romanian democracy? The previous review of a diverse array of perspectives and research show that civil society is not, indeed, "an infallible democratic miracle worker". Social and political context matter, as well as attributes of organizations and volunteering. An even stronger Nashi in Russia would probably do little to advance democratic development in this country. However, Romania's institutional arrangements and level of socio-economic development place it closer to the categories of countries that were found to have benefited from a strong associational sector. Coupled with the fact that the Romanian association members have a slight yet significant tendency to carry attributes that are generally associated with the ideal type of democratic citizen, chances are that a higher quantity and quality of volunteering would help its democratic development.

The contributions to this book

In the next chapter of this volume, József Lőrincz analyses how and why the meanings of the civil society concept have changed over the last two decades. He argues that the use of the concept gained momentum shortly after the fall of the communist regimes, a fact that succeeded to reinforce the theories assuming the importance of civil society, and delayed their criticism. Then, during the beginning of 90s, the influence of civil society in choosing the direction, speed and priorities of transition was minor, since neither the national and local elites, nor the major international partners intended to offer civil society groups any significant role. Finally, Lőrincz argues that the current meaning of civil

society overlaps almost completely with that of the NGOs, a fact that led to difficulties that cannot be handled by the theories developed at the end of the 1980's and the beginning of the 1990's, and, as a result, the concept of civil society has become analytically useless for the interpretation of Eastern European societies and morally empty as a guideline to action. He ends by proposing that since that the concept lost its moral philosophical charge, and its use is often misleading, to be replaced by other concepts, such as "local society", NGO sector, that are more precise, differentiated, connected to contemporary processes.

In Chapter 3 Daniela Angi discusses the meanings and uses of a new concept that entered the inventory of terms describing recent social and political phenomena, *global civil society*. After an extensive review of how civil society is defined and what are its links to other concepts, such as social movements, economic and political organisations, NGOs, and democratization, Daniela Angi concludes that, as an extension of the civil society concept to supra-national contexts, the theorization of global civil society misses a convincing equivalent of the nation-state that would act as a regulatory frame for the global civil society activity. Therefore, this new concept still has to be employed with reservations, given the internal problems that it entails.

The central focus of Borbala Kovacs' chapter, *Mothering and active citizenship in Romania*, is the exploration of the ways in which fresh mothers with a civically active personal history view and experience mothering and what is its impact on their present volunteering. Personal accounts of difficulties and hardships encountered as fresh parents are of major interest since they illustrate those factors that hinder these women to remain active and maintain close bonds with other members of their communities, generating social capital.

Kovacs's analysis draws inspiration from the feminist studies of civic participation that criticize recent discussions

regarding the decline of citizens' political involvement for being gender-blind. Her research challenges several of the main assumptions about the family that are used by the more traditional perspectives on civic participation. One of the most common, culturally embedded assumptions about the family asserts the separateness between the public and private spheres. The second is the implied *solidarity* of the family. In addition to disputing the two assertions, Kovacs asks several important questions aiming to clarify the causes, contexts and democratic consequences of civic activism among Romanian mothers: is women's care work, as some feminist theorists suggested, a form of civic participation? If care work is a form of civic participation, are all mothering women civically engaged? Given the diversity of women's mothering, which practices qualify as contributions and which ought to be not considered as forms of engagement? How do every day practices associated with mothering contribute to the quality of participatory democracy?

The second part of this volume focuses on several categories of potential determinants of civic engagement. In chapter 5 Wolfgang Stuppert investigates the role of the Orthodox religious denomination on civic activism of Romanians. He argues that the three most widespread Christian denominations in Eastern Europe are prepared to a different degree to adopt to the social structure that constitutes a democratic society. Stuppert focuses on one aspect of the church pro-democratic potential contribution, namely the mobilization of its members for active involvement in civil society organisations. His central hypothesis is that because of differences between their organisational cultures, the Catholic and Protestant church are more successful in generating civic activism among their members in Eastern Europe, than the Orthodox church is. Stuppert is using the Christian churches in Romania as a case study, justifying this

choice by the fact that Romania is one of the most religious countries in Europe and the Orthodox church is the dominant denomination. His main conclusion, based on both historical analysis and survey data is that, until now, the Romanian Orthodox Church has not been able to tap its full potential as a source for civic activism in Romania, which possibly is one of the reasons for the slow development of civil society in the country.

Dan Mercea and Andra Catalina Stoica investigate the relationship between Romanian non-profit organizations and their international sponsors. They aim to study how the NGOs defined their missions and to discern which were the conditions that would make partnerships between NGOs successful and to what extent partnerships would broaden and deepen the sector. In particular, Mercea and Stoica are interested to assess what are the effects of NGOs having broad or narrow missions on the quality of their partnerships, as well as how the NGOs regarded the requirement by donors to form horizontal partnerships, which have ostensibly been among the eligibility criteria for grants. The two authors collected data by using in-depth interviews, narrative analysis, thematic content analysis and the analysis of representations through oppositions.

The central hypothesis of their study is that donor-NGO dynamics has been a determining factor for non-cooperation within the sector. By this, their chapter contributes to the larger debate concerning the reasons of slow democratization in Central and Eastern Europe: have been mainly due to the resilience of socialist mentalities, such as lack of private initiative, interpersonal trust, heavy dependence on state assistance, or they have been mainly the result of to the fragmentary knowledge about Western institutions resulting in failure of the "export of democracy"?

In Chapter 7, Zsolt Molnár evaluates the effects on the Romanian NGOs of a new European Union mechanism, the

European Citizen's Initiative (ECI) that is aimed to enhance citizens' direct involvement in the legislative process. As a result of ECI, "not less than one million citizens who are nationals of a significant number of Member States may take the initiative of inviting the Commission, within the framework of its powers, to submit any appropriate proposal on matters where citizens consider that a legal act of the Union is required for the purpose of implementing the Treaties". Molnár argues that the ECI will have a broad effect on how the European NGOs influence policy making, yet that Romanian NGOs will face important difficulties in capitalizing the new opportunity because of their low level of interconnectivity and limited experience in advocacy. At the same time, successful initiatives will prove that public opinion can be voiced and endorsed, which will act as a powerful motivational factor for the NGOs to initiate and support citizen's involvement.

The last part of this volume focuses predominantly on the effects of civic engagement on democratization. In chapter 8, Aurelian Muntean and Andrei Gheorghiță extend the analysis of civil society democratic effects to the case of elections. They argue that civil society organizations can do more in influencing the decision-making process than contacting officials, drafting and promoting laws, organizing strikes, demonstrations and boycotts or signing petitions. Thus, civil society's interaction with the political society is more complex and includes three other types of interaction. The first one is represented by *direct involvement in elections*, support and promotion of "anti-political politics" – mass mobilization and political representation of interests through forums and organized movements that behave like large "umbrella organizations". Involvement of civil society in *election monitoring* programs is the second type of interaction with the political society. Finally, the third

type of interaction between civil society and political society is the *straightforward supporting of certain political parties* by civil society organizations, like trade unions, churches and NGOs. Muntean and Gheorghiţă's chapter focuses on the case of civil society organizations' involvement in the 2004 electoral competition, both at the level of the political and civil society. By using both qualitative and quantitative data, they investigate the conditions that made possible a successful challenge of the main political actors by several civic advocacy organizations.

Dragoş Dragoman's evaluates in chapter 9 what are the effects that social capital, understood in his study as an umbrella concept incorporating civic engagement, has on support for democracy. His analyses are focused on the Romanian case, and are designed to replicate a study conducted by Richard Rose and Craig Weller in Russia. His main result is that social capital has no significant effect, adding almost nothing to the "classical paradigm" that explain support for democracy by civic attitudes, economic resources and human capital. His findings are consistent with the results of Rose and Weller's research in Russia, but, at the same time, the two societies display several differences. The most important is that whereas density of useful relationships, church attendance and trust in authority institutions have no impact in Romania, they all have significant effects in the case of Russia.

Bogdan Radu's chapter, *Social capital and support for democracy in East Central Europe*, explores the connections between social capital and democratic consolidation in Central and Eastern Europe, in the context of European Union integration. Radu's analysis focuses on 14 Central and Eastern European countries – member states, and former communist countries that are still transitioning to democracy and whose prospects for EU integration are either absent

or very improbable. The dataset employed in his research is part of the World Value Survey last wave from the late 1990s and early 2000s.

His chapter starts with a discussion on social capital and the ways in which the European Union prioritizes social capital in its cohesion policy. He evaluates then public opinion data in order to describe the country levels of social capital and also for testing the influence that measures of social capital have on support for democracy. His main finding is that while trust is positively associated with both support for procedural democracy and market economy all over East Central Europe, the relationship between involvement in organizations and the same dependent variables depends on society level attributes. In particular, involvement in civic organization is a predictor of support for democracy in the more consolidated democracies of Central Europe, but it does not play any role in less consolidated systems.

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THE PROBLEM OF CIVIL SOCIETY AFTER 1989

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During the 20th century, the concept of civil society was used extensively only in its last two decades. Particularly in the social theoretical, critical literature devoted to East and Central Europe it emerged as a sort of a new paradigm that not only criticised really existing socialism, but also offered models of concrete action against it. Moreover, it offered such action a strong moral basis. The goal of the present paper is to analyse on the one hand the relevance of the concept of civil society in the description, interpretation of present-day social, political phenomena, and on the other hand to see whether it managed to maintain its pre-1989 goals and moral charge.

First, the meaning of the concept of civil society will be presented as it was used before the regime changes in 1989, and in the following couple of years.[1] After that a list of problems that – from a contemporary vantage point – were glossed by the use of the topic will be shown. Finally, it will be argued that after 1989 in practice civil society turned almost exclusively into the activity of NGO's, and this led to new problems that cannot be handled by the

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[1] The popularity of the concept of civil society reached its peak around 1991-1993, and after that it constantly lost its appeal for the academic community. In Eastern Europe interest in the topic, and hopes connected to the positive role of civil society could last even as far as 1996-1997.

optimistic theories developed at the end of the 1980's and the beginning of the 1990's. As a result, nowadays the concept of civil society is analytically useless for the interpretation of Eastern European societies and morally empty as a guideline to action. Instead, two alternatives will be presented.

1. The Concept of Civil Society before and after 1989

The revival of the concept of civil society in the 1980's was fundamentally determined by distrust in the ("socialist") state. The major reason for this was that during the former regime the centralised state tended to monopolise all redistributive and public services, while its administration was notoriously unable to meet the expectations of the population.[2]

The intellectual efforts would not have been so efficient, had not the concept of civil society worked as a powerful ideological weapon as well. During the 1980's it commonly meant the social groupings in which members of the population who were excluded from power (in this case the "people") organised themselves from the grassroots against the totalitarian state in order to achieve a certain public good. It was crucial in this conception that society was not organised "from above", "from the outside", but organised itself from "below", with the spontaneous participation of common people.

The success of the concept can be traced back to three factors. First of all, one has to notice the specific political conditions, especially if one compares it with a "kin-concept"[3], namely totalitarianism. It was more and more

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2   There were obviously other reasons as well, but the roots of distrust in the socialist state were here. In everyday life, the bankruptcy of the state was perceived as a failure in administration.

3   "Kinship" in this case means that their goal was similar: the criticism of really existing socialism.

difficult to meaningfully use the concept of totalitarianism in a routinised state socialism.[4] Particularly after it became obvious – especially after the events in Poland – that self-organising society could obtain victories in the fight against really existing socialism. Consequently, the theory of totalitarianism lost its validity (also) because the state was not able to totally control (civil) society, because open opposition, revolt proved to be possible. Thus, the theoretical strands that considered essential the opposition of civil society to the state became particularly important.

The second reason for the success of the concept was its immunity to the efforts of official propaganda – both in its "hardliner" and in its "reformist" version – to neutralise (potentially) critical views. On the one hand it could not be "critically" assimilated to scientific socialism, it could not be "reinterpreted" in a "correct" way, and on the other hand one could not say that it was only "ideology", hostile propaganda without any intellectual value. Consequently, the official reaction to criticisms based on theories of civil society was silence.

Third, one should stress that, compared to previous critical approaches that limited themselves to the condemnation of "really existing socialism", to the review of negative traits, the concept of civil society had a positive message as well: it underlined the importance, the value of the common good, of solidarity, of active, courageous participation in public life against the state seen as a public evil. This revival of classical republican civic values was the major moral message of the concept.

The regime changes of 1989 were often interpreted as the victory of civil society over the state. Hence, the differences in the success of the transformations and transitions were often interpreted in terms of the development of civil society in

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4   See Friedrich, Curtis and Barber (1969), or Lipset and Bence (1994).

particular societies.[5] The use of the concept continued to point to the distrust toward the state, to the fact that the state was not only oppressive, but a bad administrator as well. The solution proposed was that the organisations of civil society take over certain tasks commonly performed by the state; or that the new tasks and their respective non-governmental institutions be created by the state itself. The necessary resources should have been – at least partly – offered by the state. This was supposed to be good not only because civil organisations were considered to be more efficient, but also because thus certain activities could be depoliticised, transforming them into the "pure" administration of local issues, without the interference of party politics and their different logic of action. But this process was significant from another point of view as well. If the regular participation of non-political actors in public life was considered to be a major criterion of democracy, then the enlargement of the civil sphere of activity could be seen as a broadening of democracy, an approach to a sort of "substantial" democracy, this involving an improvement of the present administrative, political activity. Consequently, it is part of our problem to see the degree to which civil society contributed to the enlargement of what Bibó used to call the "small circles of liberty".

2. The Shortcomings of the Concept

The "historical chance" of the concept of civil society was that its use gained momentum when the East and Central European regime changes took place. This reinforced the theories assuming the importance of civil society, and delayed their criticism. What were the problems that the theories of civil society made difficult to observe?

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5   Thus, it was common to consider the successful transition of Poland, Hungary and Czech Republic in contrast to the less successful ones in Romania, Bulgaria, etc. as the result – among other factors – of the differences in the development of civil society.

1. Especially during the first years of transition, they were unable to differentiate between civil society – commonly characterised by an articulate opinion, firm moral values, goals, norms, and the ability to organise itself pragmatically – from amorphous masses, mobs. More often than not, all rallies, meetings, (wildcat) strikes – since they were based on participation – were interpreted as phenomena of civil society, as signs of democratisation.[6] In spite of the fact that phenomena questioning the standard view (that made participation the key element of democracy) had been previously discussed. For example, Tomaz Mastnak described already in the second half of the 1980's how the Slovenian punk movement was destroyed due to the solidarity of common citizens in intolerance (with the kind help of the state). In this case "civil society", instead of attacking the state, allied with it against a youth movement.[7]

2. The greatest opponent of civil society was seen to be the authoritarian state. In common usage, this often led to an inability to distinguish authority from authoritarianism.

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6   An excellent occasion for the Romanian democratic press (the chief supporter of the idea of civil society) to revise its views could have been the miners' attack on Bucharest in June, 1990. However, they interpreted this only as the result of manipulation on behalf of the power. At the same time, the miners (or at least some of them) were convinced that it was the democratic opposition that was manipulated, financed from the „West". None of the sides was ready to accept that the opponent's activity was – at least to a small degree – the result of self-organisation.

7   See Mastnak (1989). The text was presented in 1987. The technique used by the party press against the punk movement was simple: it encouraged readers to write letters to the editors that criticised punk way of life, dresses, music, etc. These were published, encouraging other people to write such letters. In the end the movement was banned by arguing that this was the wish of „most" common people.

"Debunking" authority was thus seen as a critique of authoritarianism, although the two are not identical. While some sort of authority is necessary for any (civil) society, this can hardly be said about authoritarianism.

3. Since according to the "paradigm" of civil society only spontaneous, grassroots organisations could count as a genuinely democratic experience, it could not discuss in a "positive" way the problem of leadership. This was avoided in two ways. In some cases by the topic of the East-Central European "intelligentsia", stressing on elements like "dedication to the cause", the role of "public man", "representative" etc. On the contrary, in other cases this role of "public intellectual" was criticised as paternalistic, intending to suppress all energies, initiatives that emerge "from below".

4. Civil society was often presented not only as the basis of liberty or democracy, but also as an overall solution to all the problems of the modern age. Paradoxically, quite often this view of civil society was based either on the ideals of a pre-modern community, or of a diverse, motley (post)modern society. What the two had in common was their goal: the creation of a harmonious society without conflicts.

5. Until the regime change, and even for some time after it, the illusion was nourished that behind the theories concerning civil society there was a clear, articulated, pragmatic view of society. Later it became obvious that this was not the case. For a proof of this, one can compare the programmes of the Solidarity developed in 1981, and respectively 1990 (the "Balcerowicz plan").[8] The differences between the two programmes cannot be explained only by the disappearance (or the transformation) of the geopolitical context that asked for "self-limitation".

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8   See SOLIDARITY (1981). For a comparison, see Glasman (1994).

3. New Problems after 1989

While before 1989 in Eastern Europe the concept of civil society manifested itself as an ideal, after that it became possible to observe whether it stood up to the expectations "in practice". Soon it became obvious that the previous problems received no solutions, while new ones emerged. Here, three will be discussed.

1. The role, the importance of civil society in inducing the regime changes in East and Central Europe is strongly disputed. But its role during transition was minor. And this could not be otherwise, since the direction, the speed and the priorities of transition were not discussed, were not decided, and were not even influenced by civil society, since the whole process was guided from above. Neither the national/local elites, nor the major international partners intended to offer civil society any role in this process.

2. Beside the negligible role played by civil society, it was also proved inadequate in interpreting regime change and transition. It is difficult to prove, and until now such efforts proved to be unsuccessful, that the major driving force behind "revolutions" in East and Central Europe was the revival of civil society. One of the most ambitious (and largely accepted) attempts at such an interpretation was Vladimir Tismăneanu's book, <u>Reinventing Politics: Eastern Europe from Stalin to Havel</u>.[9] According to the thesis of the book, the regime changes were first of all triggered by a moral rebirth of the intellectual (and moral) elite (identified with the dissidents), and as a result of this, the revival of civil society. Beside this, the author presents and analyses in a somewhat detailed manner the internal and external political, economic causes. However, it is stressed that the most important source of the regime change was moral, since this made possible the return of (democratic) politics into our region. This is also important because the degree of moral

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9   Tismăneanu (1992).

transformation accounts for the success, respectively for the failures, pitfalls, dead-ends of transition.

Starting from the texts of the most important dissidents of the age, the author states that the first impulse of moral revival was given by a change of attitude that made it impossible for the individual to strike a compromise with the regime. Thus the dissident rejected the most important means by which the regime reproduced itself, namely falsehood. Instead, disregarding the ensuing hardships, he/she chose moral integrity, "living in truth".[10] As the example of these people (mostly intellectuals who had a calling for public life) spread among the population, gradually civil society, often called in this context "second society" (so much discussed by the dissidents) crystallised.[11] When it reached a certain critical mass, this new society became so strong that – under certain internal and external conditions – it could demolish the totalitarian/authoritarian system.

At this moment criticism of this theory of revolution is not so important.[12] Instead, let us see to what degree this

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10 This idea was rather generally accepted by East and Central European dissidents. See Havel (1985), Michnik (1997), Konrád (1989). The person who actually developed the theory of "living in truth" within the circles of opponents to the regime was Jan Patočka, the spiritual mentor (and one of the spokesmen) of Charta 77. Havel took over the idea from him, and formulated its popular (and popularisable) version. The problem itself originates from Socrates. It used to be a central question for Michel Foucault as well, especially in the last period of his activity (but not only then). The striking parallels between the thought of the Czech and the French thinker who heard of each other only vaguely were shown by Árpád Szakolczai. See Szakolczai (1994).

11 It was also called "parallel society", "parallel politics", "alternative society", "alternative" or "counterculture", "countersystem". See Hankiss (1989).

12 This does not take into consideration other, extremely important political actors (e. g. the reform communists, or other „oppositional" groups within the party apparatus).

conception of civil society is useful in interpreting East and Central European transitions. It seems that for the author civil society is a sort of a "natural" motive force of democratisation. It is also implied that these societies had already experienced democracy. Further, that the civil society destroyed by dictatorship can regenerate, even under unfavourable conditions, since its germs survived the hardships. However, in this case it is difficult to understand why many commentators of the events (including the author) that took place after 1990, of the problems of transition, democratisation, consolidation, nationalism, referred to the weaknesses of civil society as a major cause. But if a civil society was so strong (not least of all morally) that it could shatter a dictatorship, how is it possible that in 1992 Tismăneanu could already talk of the lack of civil society, why did he demand that the intellectuals – according to a well-known East and Central European pattern – started fight again, accepted a public role, so that civil society could re-emerge around them? Did they not fulfil this task already before 1989? How many times should they have accepted, played this role within a generation? When can one say that civil society really "organises itself", that common people create grassroots organisations by themselves, without the patronage the intelligentsia, and thus there is no need for public intellectuals and their services?

The idea that the presence, the activity of the public intellectual was decisive in the successful democratisation of the East and Central European societies after 1989 raises questions as well. If one compares the "successful" and the "unsuccessful" states of Eastern Europe, the political elites that came into being after 1989, it is debatable whether the former dissidents had a crucial role. In Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic they have been in power only for a short while (if ever). Often their position was a symbolic one, they did not effectively influence, shape the transition.

And the new political and economic systems did not develop according to the ideas they proposed in the 1980's.[13]

These problems were actually recognised by Tismăneanu both in the book[14] and in the *Afterword* to the paperback edition, where he answered some of the criticisms.[15] However, he maintained that the interpretation of the 1989 revolutions presented in the book was valid. As for the period after 1989, his explanation was based on two major tenets. On the one hand that the populist, nationalist rhetoric of charlatans managed to suppress the ideals of civil society. They attacked both the ideals of the revolution itself, and the former dissidents who brought them to life. Instead of these ideals and personalities, they brought back the nationalist, xenophobic ideas of the inter-war period, and tried to rehabilitate former Nazi collaborators and authoritarian rulers. On the other hand, the societies of Eastern Europe were profoundly corrupt, and the ordinary people felt actually offended by the dissidents who confronted them with their acquiescence, that their lives were based on lies and compromises. It seems that the validity of Tismăneanu's civil society thesis becomes partial even for the author himself. Further, the period that elapsed after 1989 shows us that the activity of the public intellectual did not bring about any self-conscientious citizens and civil society.

All this draws attention to the fact that Tismăneanu misinterprets something: during the previous regime the members of the intellectual opposition did not formulate a political programme, when they talked about „living in

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13 It is part of the truth that with reference to the Hungarian culture in Romania, this myth was never openly expressed by anybody - although it does not contradict the Hungarian general image of the self-sacrificing intellectual.

14 For example pp. 285-286.

15 See Tismăneanu (1993).

truth", in dignity, but set a moral standard for themselves, and – at a social level – a desire. The statements were conditional: this is how a "parallel society" could, could have developed. But in the 1980's this was an extremely distant goal. This was well-known to social scientists in Poland and Hungary, countries where research was possible.[16] And even the dissidents themselves were aware of the fact that the majority of the population did not support them.[17] They could get this information first-hand, since some of the researchers were the counsellors of Solidarity as well.

3. A third very important problem that already refers to present-day phenomena is the process of "NGO-isation" of civil society. During the 1980's, the moral philosophical discussions concerning civil society could not refer to concrete ideas, practical guidelines – such discussions would have shown blatant lack of pragmatism. People became aware only after the regime change, when the creation and the activity of non-state organisations became possible, that this meant much more than rallying against something/somebody. Moreover, if it wanted to be successful, it needed totally different things: funding, an office, paper with a header, a secretary, projects, a budget plan. Those who wanted to take part actively in public life needed not be moralising intellectuals, "fighters", good speakers, etc. They did not have to "fight", but to look for partners, fill out cheques, etc. They did not activate in a world of disinterested – though amateur – solidarity, but in that of professionals who were in a race for resources. The civil sphere was by far not a matter of spontaneous, grassroots self-organisation.

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16 One should see first of all the works on the sociology of value. On the situation in Poland see for example Marody (1988), Kolarska-Bobinska (1988). On Hungary see first of all the work of Elemér Hankiss (1972, 1982, 1988, 1989).

17 See Michnik (1997).

The "civil" world was organised, and had to be organised, bureaucratic, if it wanted to be efficient. Civil society was not a problem of moral philosophy any more. It became a question of the "management" of civil society – without the previous moral charge, but referring to it whenever its interests dictated so.

It is not sure that all these developments, the effacement of the moral message is wrong in itself. On the contrary, many actors (first of all those of the civil sphere) consider that this is good, and it should be like this. Even if it has practically nothing to do with what was thought of civil society before the regime change. But this is what makes it "practical". And it may be the normal, "natural" course of things that spontaneous activities – thanks to experience and practice – become routine (if they do not disappear altogether).

At least one question remains, though. Most of the civil organisations take part in shaping, organising, "making" the public good come into being. In many cases their sphere of activity far outreaches the activists', the members', the employees' sphere of concrete existence, and their activity seriously influences the lives of other many people, most of them unknown. And many of these people have not even heard of the respective organisations. Sometimes, work is offered to the NGO's by the state or the local government. In other cases, they are local branches of large international organisations, whose models, projects they try to implement in a local context. In some cases, they try to find, "invent" their sphere of activity themselves. But in the case of a national or a local government activity aiming the change – even the improvement – of other peoples' lives can be held – theoretically, at least – accountable. In case governmental institutions do not perform properly, its leaders can be held responsible by the respective community. This is not true in the case of civil organisations. They are responsible only to

their superiors, but not to the "target" of their activity, even if this seriously impairs the life of a community.

Let us take an example.[18] In a village, as a result of an interethnic conflict, the majority attacked the local Roma population, and burnt one side of the street where they lived. A Western foundation found this out, and it built new, modern houses for those dispossessed. Houses of a value much higher than the former ones. After they left, the people living on the other side of the street burnt the new houses. The foundation, although at least morally responsible for the new conflict, did not assume any responsibility in front of the local people involved. One may wonder, whether this problem was mentioned in the reports.

Conclusion

In conclusion one seems to be entitled to state that the concept of civil society is not suitable to describe, interpret present-day phenomena.[19] The increasing disinterest concerning the topic after the regime change may be explained on the one hand by the fact that both the phenomena allegedly pertaining to civil society[20], and the uses of the concept became extremely varied[21], making it difficult to unite them into a meaningful overall concept. On

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18 The example presents a real case that is not unique.

19 It may be used as a critical tool, but then it can tell us only what is lacking, "what is not", what is desirable, etc.

20 One can only mention here that the situation is even more complicated due to the fact that many NGO's have goals that have nothing in common with the idea of the public good, solidarity, participation, etc. This is expressed by shortened forms like FANGO (fake ngo), DONGO (donor-oriented ngo), MONGO (money-oriented ngo), MANGO (maffia-oriented ngo), etc. See Miszlivetz – Jensen (1998).

21 See Papp (2001).

the other hand, it is due to the disillusionment caused by current actual practices. One can hardly say nowadays the civil society helps in creating new "small circles of freedom".

There are two ways out of this dead end. One has to accept that the concept lost its moral philosophical charge, and cannot pose as a norm, a model in the construction of society. Since its use can be misleading, in research most probably it should be replaced by other concepts ("local society", NGO, etc.) that are more precise, differentiated, connected to contemporary processes. Another possibility is to forget about the problem of Michnik, Havel, or even Tismăneanu, and return to Patočka's original project: the relationship between truth and subjectivity, the care of the self. In this case, the former dissidents are of no help, but a tradition based on Weber, Elias, or Foucault, certainly is.

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BEYOND THE BOUNDARIES OF NATION-STATE: IMAGES OF GLOBAL CIVIL SOCIETY

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In the past decade, the inventory of concepts from the sphere of social and political writings enriched with a new concept: global civil society. The extensive talk on this issue emerged alongside the seeming supra-national amplitude gained by social, economic and cultural processes that appear to integrate national societies in a trans-national network. Furthermore, the apparent expansion of global politics and global governance, alongside the concern with sustaining global democratic politics required, at least in theory, an agency that would assist them; this task has been ascribed to a nascent global civil society.

At any rate, there is a significant lack of agreement in the literature, concerning the status of global civil society, as well as the very value of this concept, as a category of social or political theory. Global civil society is considered - sometimes indistinctly - as a tangible reality, a theoretical model or a normative requirement. At the end of the day, the question what does global civil society mean remains without a definitive answer.

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1 This chapter represents a revised and updated version of the article "Beyond the boundaries of nation-state: Images of global civil society", published in *Polish Sociological Review*. 2005, No.1, pp. 15-29.

Throughout this paper, I am less concerned with the empirical realities of global civil society; I try instead to call attention to a number of approaches on global civil society that are currently available in the literature. This would further help us to sketch at least a preliminary image of global civil society and of the way it has been conceived of by the existing theories.

In doing so, I contrast the approaches on global civil society with the classic viewpoints of civil society, in its "not yet global" version, pointing to the definition, functions, and relationship of this sphere with the political structures. Global civil society is being discussed in relation to the perspectives on globalisation, assumed as the background for any consideration of a global-scale evolving civil society.

1. Prior to Global, Simply Civil Society…

Difficulties in agreeing on a convenient definition and further elaboration of global civil society have been anticipated by the controversies around its older "relative": civil society. Moreover, as it will be pointed out throughout the paper, many of the preconceptions about civil society are being reproduced by the "global-oriented" discourse, in the attempts to build a theory of global civil society.

We may start by observing that with the passing of time, the idea of civil society experienced numerous mutations and revisions; as a consequence, different authors concerned with this topic used the concept of "civil society" to name a variety of empirical realities (Outhwaite and Bottomore, 1993; Cohen and Arato, 1992; Chambers and Kymlicka, 1998).[2]

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2 *Civil Society* belongs to the category of concepts that developed a long and troublesome tradition of theorisation. Originally rooted in the works of Greek philosophers, the idea of civil society was to be later on found in the writings of authors like Locke, the theorists of the Scottish Enlightenment, as well as in the works of Hume

Jean Cohen and Andrew Arato (1992), two of the theoreticians of the current civil society debate, brought together the mainstream approaches on this issue by defining civil society as: "the sphere of social interaction between economy and state, composed above all of the intimate sphere (especially the family), the sphere of associations (especially voluntary associations), social movements and forms of public communication"(Cohen and Arato, 1992: 97). The above characterisation touches upon the key "areas" covered by this umbrella-concept, yet is excessively broad for being used as an operationalisation.

Larry Diamond (1994) attempted to operationalise civil society by advancing an institutional approach, according to which civil society consists of: 1) economic organisations: productive and commercial associations;

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and Kant. A very influential direction of theorisation was inspired by the work of Alexis de Tocqueville, who put the bases of an entire stream of thought centred on the importance of voluntary associations and the potential of associative behaviour to encourage citizenship skills. Conceived of as a sphere where individuals build social bonds and solidarities, civil society was explicitly delimited from both state and economy, starting with Hegel's theoretical contribution on this matter. In his turn, Marx treated civil society as being the same with the bourgeois society, and stressed on the conflict driven nature of this sphere, as well as on the state's compliance to the dominant interests from civil society. The late 70s and the 80s brought in Central Eastern Europe a new wave of reflection on the idea of civil society, which was this time conceived of as a space for opposition to the totalitarian regimes. See more about the historical evolution of the concept of *civil society* in: *The Blackwell Dictionary of 20th Century Social Thought,* edited by W. Outhwaite and T. Bottomore, Blackwell, 1993, pp. 75-77. An extended discussion of the theoretical perspectives on civil society is available in: Cohen, J and Arato, A: *Civil Society and Political Theory,* MIT Press, 1992, as well as in: Chambers, S and Kymlicka, W, Eds. *Alternative Conceptions of Civil Society,* Princeton University Press, 1998;

2) cultural organisations: religious, ethnic, communal and other institutions that defend collective values, beliefs and symbols; 3) informational and educational organisations: devoted to the production and dissemination of public knowledge, ideas, news and information; 4) interest – based organisations: having as goal the advancement of the common functional or material interest of their members; 5) developmental organisations: institutions that combine individual resources to improve the infrastructure and quality of life of the community; 6) political organisations: parties, social movements, and civic groups seeking to improve the political system; 7) social and emotional institutions: families (Diamond, 1994).

The inclusion of political parties and of economic organisations in the civil society sphere is a contested issue; one finds in the literature conflicting standpoints claiming that the activity of these actors disqualifies them from being part of the civil society sector. Moreover, quite commonly, civil society is defined as non-governmental sector, which advances NGOs as its main actors. This type of theoretical reductionism is sometimes sustained by the empirical realities: NGOs may be at times the most visible and the most popularised (mainly through mass media coverage) actors of civil society. This situation is likely to occur especially when civil society sphere goes across the early stages of its development.[3]

Other approaches address social movements as the central actors of civil society, suggesting that they constitute "the dynamic element in processes that might realise the positive potentials of modern civil societies" (Cohen and

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3   As it has been the case in the countries from Central Eastern Europe, after 1989, when the sphere of civil society needed to be rebuilt, in many situations with great difficulties to overcome the legacies of Communism. In this context, NGOs recorded the greatest development and became the main exponents of the civic sector;

Arato, 1992).[4] In this sense, Habermas has stressed on the importance of social movements (and particularly that of the new social movements) and on the dual nature of their action: on one hand social movements "directly influence the political system", while on the other they "are reflexively concerned with revitalising and enlarging civil society" (Chambers, 1998:98). As it will be later touched upon in the paper, the global dimensions that civil society allegedly develops, reaffirm the importance of social movements, especially in the creation of a trans-national public sphere.

   Habermas's contribution goes further in his considerations on lifeworld and system, and the theorisation of the public sphere (Chambers, 1998). The above author imagined lifeworld as a "background against which all social interaction takes place", a sphere that is based on meanings, and interpretations, circulated and transmitted further through communication. Lifeworld, which operates through communication, is contrasted with the "system" (state and economy) that operates through power and money respectively (Chambers, 1998:92). Civil society represents in this view the institutionalised aspect of lifeworld, and is composed of "a network of associations that institutionalise problem-solving discourses on questions of general interest inside the framework of organised public spheres" (Habermas, 1996).

As far as the public sphere is concerned, it is conceived of as a communicative structure rooted in the lifeworld and an extension of civil society. It is also the site where issues raised in civil society are identified, problematised and

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4   See for instance Ch. X: *Civil Society and Social Movements*, in Cohen and Arato: *Civil Society and Political Theory*, Cambridge, MIT Press, 1992. Throughout the chapter, the authors attempt to put together – in a coherent framework – two competing perspectives on social movements: the «resource mobilisation» paradigm and the «identity – oriented» approach;

ultimately voiced (Habermas, 1996: 329-387). In this way, the public sphere has the ability to translate the interests of civic groups in discursive form and moreover to contribute to the shaping of group identities. The way in which Habermas (1996) conceived of the public sphere - despite the subsequent critiques that his theory has been confronted with - points to an important function of civil society: that of sustaining a democratic environment.

We arrive in this way to another important issue: the functions ascribed in theory to civil society. The existing literature frequently refers to the democratic function of civil society. Briefly, this concerns the abilities of civil society to strengthen citizenship skills, to defend and popularise the democratic values.[5] In addition, as a legacy of the liberal views that continue to exist in the democratic theory, civil society - understood as a set of extra-state institutions - provides "the basis for limitation of state power, hence for the control of the state by society, and hence for democratic political institutions as the most effective means of exercising that control" (Huntington as quoted by Diamond, 1997:9).

Referring to the economic dimension of civil society, Inglehart suggested that the dense networks of associational membership seem to stimulate economic growth, at least

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5 Any reference to the democratic virtues of civil society needs to take into account Tocqueville's contribution, which exerted a great influence on the subsequent approaches. We find in this sense a whole stream of "neo-Tocquevillian" authors who elaborated on issues such as associative behaviours, citizens' participation in civic life, and social capital (Putnam is perhaps the best illustration in this sense). Other well-known studies that stressed on the democratic role of civil society are those conducted by Almond and Verba, who dealt mostly with the issue of civic culture. Among more recent works from this field, we could mention Pippa Norris's book: *Critical Citizens. Global Support for Democratic Government*, Oxford University Press, 1999;

in the earlier stages of development (Inglehart, 1997). At this point we should however mention the theoretical uncertainty concerning the inclusion vs. exclusion of economic organisations from the sphere of civil society. Possibly, the common understanding of civil society as non-profit sector has enforced such ambiguity.

Further on, the dominant way of thinking of civil society stresses on the plurality and diversity of this sphere (Cohen and Arato as quoted in Habermas, 1996). The multiplicity of actors that populate civil society reflects the plurality of interests that grow, and coexist here (in more or less friendly rapports). Such interests are articulated and voiced by organisations of civil society created for this purpose. Hence civil society has also the function of representing the grievances of various groups in society.

Alongside the diversity of opinions on the constituents and functions of civil society, one important aspect is the relation of this sphere with the political authority (particularly with the state). In theory, state and civil society are currently treated as separate entities; the intensity of contacts between the two, the degree of autonomy of civil society and the state's responsiveness to the needs and demands of civil society vary according to the perspective from which they are analysed.[6] However, majority of theories agree that the state is the highest authority to provide the formal rules for the functioning of the political system as such and the general context for the operation of civil society. The latter,

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6   At least concerning the current usages, one starting point could be to differentiate within the approaches from the classical theories of political sociology, between the liberal, elitist, pluralist and Marxist traditions respectively. Another way to consider this issue is to address the place of civil society in the theoretical models of democracy. See for a more extensive discussion on this issue: Cohen, J and Arato, A: *Civil Society and Political Theory,* Cambridge, MIT Press, 1992;

particularly when its democratic virtues are highlighted, is thought of as acting as a reservoir of legitimacy for the state and for its policies, as well as a valuable supporter of democratic politics.[7]

Several remarks are needed however, concerning the democratic potential of civil society. Regardless the excitement with which the discourse of civil society has been embraced in the last decades (also helped by the democratisation processes from the end of eighties and beginning of nineties), one should avoid to conflate the actual democratic merits of civil society.

Firstly, the internal dynamics of this sphere are often questionable in terms of their democratic character (the nature and the activity of some of the organisations that fall under the umbrella of civil society may at times be at odds with democratic principles).[8]

Secondly, for civil society to effectively enhance democracy, people's and organisations' good intentions at declaratory level do not suffice; in this sense, Foley and Edwards rightly pointed out that the "role organised groups in civil society will play […] depends crucially on the larger political setting." Related to this is the hypothetical situation in which civil society can counteract not only an

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7   See more on the relationship between civil society, political structures and governance in: Warren, M, E: *Civil Society and Good Governance,* Paper prepared for U.S. Civil Society Project, Ford Foundation, Centre for the Study of Voluntary Organizations and Services, Georgetown Public Policy Institute, Georgetown University, 1999;

8   For a more extensive discussion on the "uncivil" dimensions of civil society see Chambers, S: "A critical Theory of Civil Society" in Chambers, S and Kymlicka, W, Eds. *Alternative Conceptions of Civil Society,* Princeton University Press, 1998, pp. 90-111, and Kocka, J.: "Civil Society from a Historical Perspective", in *European Review,* Vol. 12, No. 1, February, 2004, pp: 65-79;

authoritarian regime, but also a democratic establishment (Foley and Edwards, 1996).

Thirdly, the universality of civil society as a catalyst of democracy is highly uncertain. As Keane suggested, "the language of civil society speaks with a Western accent (Keane, 2003: 29). This further means that civil society - both as ideal and practice - is not easily transferred to areas that lack this ethos and/or tradition, or to areas that are simply resistant to accept it. I will come back to these aspects when discussing the universality problems posed by the idea of global civil society.

2. The Opening towards Global

2.1. Bases for the Global Civil Society Debate

The previous part of the paper focused on several aspects of civil society theorisation, looked at from the "classical" point of view, within a framework built around two actors: the nation-state and the national civil society. The coming parts of the paper will consider the global dimensions that civil society is assumed to acquire.

The way for the recent talks over the emergence of a global civil society (further abbreviated as GCS) has been opened by the transformations of the political, economic, and socio-cultural processes that began to go over national borders. Within the evolving literature on this topic, encouraged by the novelty of the issue and its attractiveness for theoretical speculation, the attempts to theorise GCS are still far from reaching an agreement. However, the starting point for majority of these theories is the general acceptance of globalisation as the underlying source of GCS. This generates further differences of opinion, as globalisation itself is variously defined, according to the importance attributed to one or another of its dimensions (economic, cultural, informational, or political).

Yet, before going into the "globalisation debate", let us first see how global civil society has been defined. Some

authors characterise GCS as "the sphere of ideas, values, institutions, organisations, networks, and individuals located between family, the state and the market and operating beyond the confines of national societies, polities and economies" (Anheier et al, 2001: 17). Alternatively, GCS has been defined as "the field of action and thought occupied by individual and collective citizen initiatives of a voluntary, non-profit character both within states and trans-nationally" (Falk, 1998).

These types of definitions seem an extension of the empirically oriented accounts on civil society, with the specification of the international or trans-national context of action. The advantage of such approaches is their low charge of normative aspects, which makes them easy to operate with for research purposes; conversely, their main disadvantage is the simplification of a phenomenon of a more complex nature. The empirically oriented characterisations of GCS are problematic for one more reason. Keane has signalled the difficulty to assess the practical realities of GCS: its actors, the nature, amplitude and impact of their activity, due to the limited amount of data available at the global scale, both of quantitative and qualitative type (Keane, 2001).

Other approaches on GCS point more explicitly to the relationship of the latter with different aspects of globalisation, and integrate the discussion on GCS in wider contexts of explaining the global political and economic order. Such approaches focus on the relationship of GCS with the emerging global governance institutions and with the global market forces respectively.

Before looking more closely at these approaches, I would like to move the attention to globalisation, in terms of its nature and influence on the GCS. As mentioned earlier, there is no unique definition for globalisation. Some authors described this phenomenon as "the widening, deepening and speeding up of worldwide interconnectedness in all

aspects of contemporary social life"(Held et al, 1999: 2). Alternatively, globalisation has been conceived of as engaging "flows of goods, capital, people, information, ideas, images, and risks across national borders, combined with the emergence of social networks and political institutions which constrain the nation state." (Nash, 2000: 47). Moreover, through global networks of communication built by the growing circulation of information via international channels, globalisation is assumed to provide the bases for a "growing global consciousness, the sense of a common community of mankind" (Anheier et al, 2001: 7).

This is not to say that theory claims, leaving no room for question, that all spheres of life entered the "age of globalisation". There are different degrees to which globalisation is believed to have colonised the social, economic and political orders we grew accustomed to. In this sense, Held et al synthesised the prevailing debates on globalisation and distinguished between three leading perspectives: the hyperglobalisation (with Ohmae as leading representative), the sceptical view (see Paul Hirst's and G. Thompson's work: Globalisation in Question), and the transformationalist point of view (Rosenau and Giddens, emphasising the changes experienced by the world wide societies in adapting to the growing interconnectedness in a highly uncertain world) (Held et al, 1999: 2). According to Held et al, five key issues generate divergence of opinion between theoreticians of globalisation: conceptualisation, causation, periodisation, impacts and trajectories. I refer briefly to several of these concerns on globalisation, as identified by the above-mentioned authors.

Accordingly, for hyper-globalists, globalisation means essentially a "reordering of the framework of human action"; its dominant features are global capitalism, global governance and global civil society; globalisation is made possible by capitalism and technology, and it will eventually lead to the

end of the nation-state. Sceptics conceive of globalisation as internationalisation and regionalisation; globalisation is seen as supported by states and markets, hence internationalisation depends on the accord and support of the nation-states. Further on, the transformationalist approach depicts globalisation as a "reordering of interregional relations and action at a distance"; its driving forces are the "combined forces of modernity", whereas its ultimate outcomes point to the "transformation of state power and world politics" (Held et al, 1999: 10-16).

All these models, besides the different normative aspects they entail, were built through selecting one or more dimensions from the empirical reality that seemed to display some globalising tendencies. For instance the hyperglobalisation view concentrates on "the rise of the global economy, the emergence of institutions of global governance, and the global diffusion and hybridisation of cultures" (Held et al, 1999: 4). Advocates of this approach defend such confident assumptions by pointing to another phenomenon of the last decades: the growth of the global infrastructures of communication, which in its turn facilitates trans-national cooperation between peoples. A further effect of growing interconnectedness – which bears the trademark of the developing technologies – is the increasing awareness amongst the worldwide citizens and groups of shared interests and aspirations. Such manifestations of globalisation encourage promoters of hyperglobalisation to speak about the "evidence of an emerging GCS" (Held et al, 1999: 5).

Against the temptation of taking for granted all these assumptions and further decide that all prerequisites for the emergence of GCS are in place, it must be bared in mind that they solely point to one potential way of grounding GCS. Additional approaches have considered GCS in relation with the global governance and the sustainability of world

democracy. As it will be later on seen, such theses are questionable with regard to their premises, over-confident about the universality of democratic principles and about the actual existence of global politics as such.

For the moment, an additional aspect should be noted, concerning the novelty of globalisation as a multifaceted phenomenon. Despite the proliferation of global processes predominantly in the past decade, several commentators insist that in reality a "supra national non-governmental sphere" existed long before the theory adopted concepts such as trans-national public sphere, global civil society, or other analogous formulations. As an illustration, Anheier concentrates on the international NGOs, which have, in his opinion, a long history: they started to come into view long before the term INGO entered the scholar or colloquial language. Such examples are the anti-slavery institution (1839), the International Committee of the Red Cross (1864), and other similar associations, the emergence of which made possible the existence in 1874 of no less than 32 international organisations (Anheier et al, 2001: 4). Apart from that, Keane suggested that the very idea (or ideal) of a supra national society that provides laws and rules to bind world-wide citizens together, was present in theory long before anyone thought of globalisation and its present amplitude (Keane, 2001: 25).

Other authors look at globalisation starting from the idea of globalism, understood as "a state of the world involving networks of interdependence at multicontinental distances"; in this context, "globalisation and de-globalisation refer to the increase or decline of globalism"(Keohane, 2000: 2). As a multi-faceted phenomenon, globalism entails a variety of dimensions: economic, military, environmental, social, cultural, and political (Keohane, 2000: 2-7). Though globalism does not mean universalism, an increasing adhesion to common norms and standards brings together

local specificities with widely shared patterns of thought and action.

Last but not least, quite often the "global" is being discussed in relation with the "trans-national", another concept used to depict the contemporary trends of ideas and processes to cross national boundaries. Allegedly, this term entered the current usage in the 1970s, as a result of economic and environmental questions being recognised as "a high priority for the global agenda" (Encyclopaedia UNESCO). In this sense, a number of authors argued for conceptual delimitation when referring to global civil society and trans-national civil society respectively. Briefly, their hint is that trans-national describes in fact any process that crosses the boundaries of one state, meaning that one needs just a single border to be transgressed by a movement or organisation, in order for this to become trans-national (Falk: 1998, Guidry et al, 2000). On the other hand, "global" resonates in a more appropriate way, as it suggests larger amplitude of the processes taking place, by implying more actors, and a wider geographical area of action.

2.2. Scenarios of Global Civil Society

I have looked in the previous section at several common definitions of GCS and at the place of this category within the broader conceptualisations of globalisation. I move now the discussion to more specific aspects, related to the constituents and tasks of GCS, as developed within various theoretical models.

We have seen earlier that in the talk over the national civil societies, a frequent reductionist "temptation" equates this sphere with the aggregate of NGOs. This trend, in part explained by NGOs enjoying sometimes the biggest visibility in civil society, is transferred also to global contexts. Once more, the poor availability of empirical data may be misleading and biased. Nevertheless, advocates of GCS

point to the growth of international NGOs, as important actors operating in this sphere.[9] The beginnings of the INGOs' golden era are located in the past decade, when the international scene witnessed the emergence of an increasing number of local NGOs getting involved at global level, in environmental and social issues particularly (Encyclopaedia UNESCO).[10] By pursuing common goals, INGOs managed to overcome the spatial separations, by engaging in aggregated networks expanded over wide geographical areas. According to some opinions, "many of the NGOs have a social movement character. They promote models of Human Rights, consumer rights, environmental regulations, social and economic development and human equality and justice" (Guidry et al, 2000).

Alongside the bright side, reflected by the growth of INGO sector in the past decade, are the less bright aspects that need to be considered when looking at the global non-profit area. In this sense, accountability and transparency of INGOs are advanced as two of the main problems that these organisations are confronted with (Chandhoke, 2002). In addition, what also shadows the INGO area is the vague power of representation that these organisations have. Chandhoke points to this aspect suggesting that often "global

9   The usual definition given to INGOs describes these actors as "autonomous organisations that are *non-governmental*, i.e. not instrumentalities of the government, and *non profit*, that is not distributing revenue or income." Cf. Anheier, H et al.: *Global Civil Society*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2001 p. 4; emphasis added;

10 Cf. *Encyclopaedia UNESCO*, article no. 1.44.3.7 on NGOs. The same source records two major events related to the emergence of INGOs in the 90s. For the environmental sector: the Rio Earth Summit in 1992 and for social issues respectively, the Copenhagen Social Summit, 1995. Available at http://www.staff.city.ac.uk/p. willetts/CS-NTWKS/NGO-ART.HTM, last visited 03.02.2005;

NGOs come in from the outside armed with their own ideas of what is wrong and what should be done to remedy the situation" (Chandhoke, 2002: 46); this in turn leads to the circumstances where "ordinary human beings are denied the opportunity to frame their responses in their own terms" (Chandhoke, 2002: 46).

Together with INGOs, social movements, as components of GCS have received a great deal of attention in the recent literature. Whether understood in the "classic" manner or in accordance with the new social movements paradigm (Diani, 2000), these actors are increasingly advanced as laying the bases of a "trans-national public sphere" (Guidry et al, 2000). In this sense it is assumed that globalisation offered a wider range of opportunities for social movements, starting from ideological inspiration, to legal frameworks and funding for becoming operational.[11] Such evolutions stimulate the growth of social movements both in number and scope, varying from protection of the environment, human rights, promotion of adult education to the representation and defence of interests of specific categories – women, ethnic or religious minorities, and so on - provided that "identity politics also escape state borders" (Walzer, 1993).

What is more, social movements started to be less interpreted within the resource mobilisation paradigm – which dominated for long time this field of theorisation – leaving room for more culturally-oriented approaches that stress on the importance of "culture in shaping participants' perceptions of aims and strategies" (Nash, 2000:100-155). In this sense, it is relevant to bring into attention the cultural dimension of globalisation that allows people

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11 A more extensive discussion of this issue is available in Guidry, J. et al: "Globalisations and Social Movements", in *Globalisations and Social Movements. Culture, Power, and the Transnational Public Sphere,* University of Michigan Press, 2000;

worldwide to have access to common cultural norms and codes. If the creation of a common awareness amongst the citizens worldwide depends upon a shared identity, then the potentialities of building such identity should probably be looked for in the growing cultural interconnectedness. The underlying hypothesis of this argument assumes culture as the sphere where identities are being created and reconfigured.

One should however think of cultural globalisation without mechanically associating it with the idea of homogenisation. More appropriately, cultural globalisation may be conceived of as involving the creation of a system of cultural codes and values that are accessible to and promoted among a wide public, not confined to the geographical limits of national borders. Just as globalisation taken in the general sense, cultural globalisation is not an entirely new phenomenon; a number of manifestations in this sense could be found also in the nineteenth century and in the early decades of the 20th century. Without doubt, nowadays, the amplitude and speed of cultural globalisation intensified, assisted by the growing communicational interconnectedness.[12]

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12 See also Held et al: *Global Transformations: Politics, Economics and Culture,* Stanford University Press, Stanford, 1999, Chapter 7: "Globalisation, Culture and the Fate of Nations". Cultural globalisation, in order to actually take place needs to rely on a network of organisations that operate transnationally, in other words it needs to be supported by "infrastructures and institutions of cultural transmission, reproduction and reception on a global – transregional or transcontinental scale." According to Held and Mc Grew, this organisational dimension of cultural globalisation is nowadays the most visible one, which makes its empirical accountability quite not problematic. The opposite happens with another aspect that captures a great part of the discussion around cultural globalisation, concerning the impact it may have on the national cultures that have for long time been the sole holders of cultural codes and cultural production;

Within this emerging common public space, where groups worldwide have the chance to advance their shared interests and to defend their identities, social movements that transgress national borders become important actors. The activity of trans-national social movements has also been discussed by Falk, as part of the dichotomous model "globalisation from below" vs. "globalisation from above." Falk contrasted two processes: «globalisation from below»that refers to "trans-national democratic forces and their implicit dedication to the creation of a GCS, as an alternative scenario of the future to that of the global political economy, shaped by trans-national market forces" and »globalisation from above«, essentially related to the market forces that operate at global level, promoting "world trade and investment" (Falk, 1995,1998).

Globalisation from above, imposed by elites, is driven by the growing capitalism; the norms promoted by this type of globalisation are less concerned with the real human needs, as they rather follow the logic of economic expansion (Baker, 2002). In this context, it becomes the task of GCS, and especially of social movements to resists to the oppressing processes of economic globalisation. This line of argument introduces the idea of globalisation being an "uneven process", a fact that has been repeatedly touched upon in the literature.[13] Falk further suggests that the mobilised forces of globalisation from below, while orienting their efforts to ameliorate the negative effects, need to "reinstrumentalise the state to the extent that it redefines its role as mediating between the logic of capital and the priorities of its people" (Falk, 1998).

The idea of globalisation from below has also been discussed by Appadurai, who referred to this issue in

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13 See also Keane, J.: *Global Civil Society,* Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2003;

his talking over the so-called "grassroots globalisation". Appadurai underlined the complex and at times conflicting relationships that the NGOs and the movements engaged in international networks develop with the states in which they come into being, with the wider civil society sphere and last but not least with the local communities (Appadurai, 2000:15). Besides the complicated bonds local-national-global, the organisations and movements that are part of the globalisation from below developments are generally concerned with preventing/correcting the growing inequalities that globalisation (especially when understood in economic terms) produces (Appadurai, 2000: 16 italics added).

The assumed role that GCS could play in countering the global market effects brings into light another important aspect: the alleged erosion of the nation-state's capabilities to have control over spheres that gain supranational dimensions. Economy is solely one of these spheres. Another area is represented by politics, and in this sense two streams of thought seem to prevail: one that stresses the growth of global politics and the related structures of global governance, and a second that stays confident in the political authority of the nation-state, both domestically and in international relations. Though highly contested as to how much they echo the existing realities, global politics are increasingly invoked in the literature, against Hobsbawm's objection that "globalisation is a process that cannot easily be applied to politics" (Hobsbawm as quoted by Keane, 2003: 95). It is accordingly believed that global politics involve "the extension of political power and political activity across the boundaries of the modern nation-state" (Held et al, 1999: 49).

Thus understood, global politics open the way to global governance, which involves more than the "formal institutions and organisations such as institutions of state and intergovernmental cooperation", but also the

"organisations and pressure groups – transnational social movements, non-governmental organisations – which pursue goals and objectives which have a bearing on transnational rules and authority systems" (Held et al, 1999: 50). In this line of thinking, GCS is attributed an important role within the context of global governance. The actors of GCS engage, willingly and responsibly, in a partnership with the institutions of governance, for pursuing commonly defined goals. Some authors point in this sense to the virtues of INGOs alliances with the "widespread international governmental organisations", in the context of the global governance (Nash, 2000: 55).

From the above assumptions it may be inferred that the normative discourse in theory identifies the pursuing of supranational (or global) democratic politics as one of the ultimate goals (or tasks) of GCS. Yet, there are a number of aspects that resist the optimistic scenario of an alliance between GCS, global governance and the global democratic politics. GCS can sustain global democratic politics, provided that it has itself (as an articulated societal sphere) sufficient cohesion, awareness of common interests, and motivation coming from its constituents.

It is true that globalisation, the openness and growing speed of communication facilitate the interconnectedness of domestic civil societies that are nowadays more likely to work together and to follow common goals, based on the recognition of shared or global issues. Yet, an objection often raised in the literature points to the difficulties in assuming a sense of solidarity that is usually placed at the base of common efforts within civil society. This happens, according to some points of view, because a global civil society, and in fact any kind of civil society that is taken out of its domestic reference, lacks the quality of being a political community (Held, 2002). Without this background that involves common socio-cultural identities, a common political

ethos, institutional structures that protect and represent the community, common structures of rights and duties for the members (Held: 2002), the bases for common action of GCS are questioned in the literature. A partial solution to the problem of lack of common identities and solidarities might be looked for in the cultural globalisation and its potential to bring people closer through common cultural codes; yet this solution is also to be treated with reservation, unless supplemented by institutional frameworks. Though nowadays the international scene crosses significant changes, in the sense of a certain articulation of structures of common rights and duties, it is not sure whether they are not merely formal and too little substantive (European Union may be a good illustration in this sense).

Apart from these aspects, it is acknowledged that "GCS requires political and legal protection through legal and political bodies that guarantee basic freedom of association and protect those whose voices are ignored"(Keane: 2001:36). The immediate question is who has the responsibilty for such a task? Within the national civil society paradigms, the functioning of this sphere is dependent upon the existence of a "rule of law", that would "ensure legal guarantees for citizens; freedoms and independent associational life" (Linz and Stepan: 1996:5-7). The formation of such a rule of law is essentially the task of the state. In the case of GCS, things get more complex as both nation-state and international political structures have an input in this sense. Moreover, as Keane rightly pointed out "GCS has emerged and today operates in the absence of a global state, a world empire, or comprehensive regulatory structures that are describable in the state-centred terms of political realism" (Keane, 2003: 94).

David Held, in elaborating his model of cosmopolitan democracy, suggests that a cosmopolitan democratic law that "has recognised powers and constraints, rights and duties, which transcend the claims of nation-states", regulates the

functioning of global civil society (Held, 1995:101). In the same model, "civil society provides for the public spheres, which taken together operate as a basis for dispersed sovereignty in a system of global governance, generate critical resources directed towards the institutional power required by such governance, and provide opportunities for voluntary association at the local level"(Baker, 2002: 930).

Falk was also concerned with the legal framework within which GCS operates and argued in this sense that an international Law of Humanity emerges, that tends to dominate the former frameworks regulated through inter-state connections. The best illustration of such law is, according to Falk, the international law of human rights, whose "formal reality has been established through the primary agency of the states", but whose "historical potency […] is predominantly a consequence of its implementation through the agency of civil society" (Falk, 1995:163). The same author distinguishes between two manners in which civil society's institutions (currently achieving global dimensions) got involved in this issue: on one hand, through the trans-national non-governmental sphere (primarily Amnesty International and other "regional watch groups"). Essentially, their activity is oriented toward assuring the "well-being of the individual human being" (Falk, 1995:164), first of all through monitoring the way in which laws are implemented and subsequently the signalling of eventual disregard of the basic human rights. On the other hand, Falk addresses a second manner of civil society's involvement, based on the "activation of peoples to pursue their emancipation from oppressive structures of governance" (Falk, 1995:164). This "emancipatory" aspect of action is extended in the case of global civil society through the initiatives of transnational social movements and of international non-governmental organisations.

The ideas developed by Held and Falk hint to highly problematic issues, such as the universality of democratic values and the actual capabilities of GCS to be effective as an agency.[14] Chandhoke argued that at least for the moment "GCS actors reflect the consensus that liberal democracy is the only form of democracy that remains of value…"(Chandhoke, 2002: 52). The liberal values that are behind the GCS project are emphasised also by Benessaieh: "Liberally oriented scholars define a GCS as a universal project for social justice, gender and economic equity, and citizens' inclusion and participation in governance"(Benessaieh, 2003:108). As it has been suggested earlier in the paper, the universal dissemination and implementation of democracy and civil society are not an easy task. Beyond the Western core-countries and some of their Eastern neighbours that currently attempt to re-build their civil societies, there are still areas where democratic values and the associated institutions of civil society are not likely to materialise very soon. Keane speaks in this sense about "no-go areas for civil society" (Keane, 2003:18), that place under question mark the very globality of a global civil society.

3. Closing remarks

I attempted throughout this paper to bring together several approaches on global civil society, recorded in the literature for the most part as corollaries to wider debates on the global transformations of the past decades. In doing so, I intended to draw attention both to the innovative ideas so far advanced on this issue, and to some of the shortcomings that challenge the current theorisations.

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14 See also Benessaieh's critique to the "transnational approaches" on global civil society in Bennessaieh, A: "Seven Theses on Global Society" in *Cultural Dynamics*, 15 (1), 103-126, Sage Publications, London, 2003, as well as Baker, 2002.

Before discussing the nature and amplitude of these global scale evolutions, I have focused on a number of aspects from the theorisation of civil society, understood as an autonomous associative societal sphere confined to the borders of a given nation-state.

Moving the spotlight on the global civil society, in which allegedly national civil societies tend to be integrated, we have seen that the global expansion of economic, political and cultural phenomena altered the configurations of a variety of spheres of life. Such evolutions also influenced the way in which theory came to make sense out of the ongoing processes; in this sense, the attempts to theorise the emerging global civil society are solely a part of this theoretical reframing.

A number of theoretical approaches emphasise the militant dimensions of GCS (as aggregate of organisations and groups that plead for various causes of global interest) and the mobilisation of individuals and organisations. Other perspectives are more "contaminated" by the idea of global market, thereby including in this sphere trans-national corporations and firms, which ultimately play an important role in economic terms. Just as in the case of national civil societies, non-governmental organisations are advanced as important actors of the GCS sphere. Alongside INGOs, social movements gained much attention in the talk over global civil society.

Looking at GCS from the social movements perspective needs to also consider the cultural dimensions of globalisation and the accompanying communication interconnectedness; such approach could be useful in elucidating how national social movements come together and join their efforts for common causes and purposes.

If looking at the emergence of GCS through the social movements paradigm, as referred to above, may be useful and theoretically not too problematic, what needs more

theoretical reflection, is the complex interrelation between on one hand national civil societies and nation-state and global civil society and the global governance on the other hand. The two dyads: national and global, cannot be conceived of as having entirely separate dynamics, nor should the relationship between them be imagined as one of sheer subordination. This hints to the wider problem of the status of GCS vis a vis its national counterparts. Is GCS the simple sum of national civil societies or is it more than just a simple aggregation? The difficulty of any definitive answer to this question is given by the different positioning of respectively GCS and national civil societies to wider structures of authority, be it political, economic and cultural. We must note in this sense that even if they lose from their long established prerogatives, states remain the primary holders of authority in political and economic terms.

If we agree with Keane's position, according to which "GCS has to be thought of as more than the simple sum of territorially based and defined civil societies" (Keane, 2003), than there are still many unanswered questions as to how GCS's activity is to be regulated, given the lack of a well defined international system of law or political bodies.

In this sense, theoretical models that attempt to place GCS in a model of global politics, moreover global democratic politics (the very existence of which is questionable) tend at times to oversimplify the interaction between these levels and to assume mechanically that a global civil society emerges, or it is built because it is needed to support global politics; at the same time, this support is taken for granted, excluding the possibility of a potential lack of it.

To end with, though it hints to a dynamic and changing global order, GCS – as a new conceptual tool for social and political sciences – still has to be employed with reservations, given the internal problems that the concept itself entails. As an extension of the civil society concept to

supra-national contexts, the theorisation of GCS misses a convincing equivalent of the nation-state that would act as a regulatory frame for GCS activity. Keane's observation on the strong idealtypish character of GCS seems, at least for the time being, wholly acceptable (Keane, 2001).

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MOTHERING AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT IN ROMANIA

Borbala KOVÁCS

As engagements of individuals, mothering and civic participation appear to have little in common due to the fact that while one is carried out in the private sphere of the family – mothering –, the other takes place in the public sphere of the more widely or narrowly defined political community. Arguably, individuals who engage in one of these two activities will be unable to do the other: individuals who mother cannot become civically engaged, and individuals who volunteer on a regular basis for the betterment of their communities will not be able to fulfill tasks associated with childbirth and child-rearing. Or, on the contrary, one can see no incompatibility between mothering while concomitantly staying publicly engaged in issues of the political community. Scholarship focusing on the study of mothering as a social practice has failed to address the relationship between mothering and civic engagement until recently, tacitly maintaining the status quo that separates the private sphere, including mothering, from the public sphere where civic participation has traditionally been located[1].

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1 I make a distinction between mothering as a physiological pheno-menon entailing conception, pregnancy, birth and post-partum mother-child relationships and mothering as a *social practice*, historically, culturally and economically embedded in society's collective consciousness.

Increasingly, however, feminist scholars have been pointing out the centrality of care in the exercise of citizenship (Fraser; Lister; Kremer). How can one then construct the argument that civic engagement and mothering are not disparate social practices, but rather thoroughly connected, affecting one another and profoundly shaping women's lives?

Feminist theorists of civic participation have been the first to point out that discussions regarding the decline of citizens' political involvement have been gender-blind (Herd & Harrington Meyer 665). Some have argued that women's care work, including mothering, is a form of civic participation (Herd and Harrington Meyer), while others have asserted that civic engagement has to be defined as a continuum of active citizenship rather than as a checklist of certain types of activities deemed by government or party ideology to be forms of civic participation (Greene). However, their proposals to revisit the established conceptual framework of civic participation in order to include certain activities of women or turning understandings of civic engagement more fluid are novelties to empirical research. If care work is a form of civic participation, are all mothering women civically engaged? Given the diversity of women's mothering, which practices qualify as contributions and which ought to be not considered as forms of engagement? How do everyday practices associated with mothering contribute to the quality of participatory democracy? Assertions of feminist theorists have yet to translate into new approaches, new questions and new concepts in the empirical study of mothering and that of the relationships between mothering and civic participation[2].

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2   The distinction between mothering and motherhood bears relevance for the purpose of this article. Terry Arendell, for instance, does not distinguish between the two terms, although Snitow – quoting Adrienne Rich and Rachel DuPlessis writing on motherhood in the late 1970's – explains that motherhood stands for the

The central focus of this study is the exploration of the ways in which new mothers with a civically active personal history view and experience mothering, as well as their volunteering. Personal accounts of difficulties and hardships encountered as new mothers re of major interest since they best illustrate those factors that hinder parenting adults, mothers in particular, to remain active in their communities and maintain close bonds with other members of their communities, generating what Putnam calls social capital. Their accounts of the mothering experience as a whole are valuable in understanding transformations in women's interests, priorities and focus and illustrate more general aspects of mothering in contemporary Romania. Their experiences as volunteers and members in organizations and associations shed light on the different motivations that can drive individuals into civic action.

Participatory actions emerge when individuals have resources that they can put to use for the benefit of their communities, when they are motivated enough to do so, when they can be mobilized (i.e. the community has channels through which individuals can be targeted and invited to get involved) and when they are available to do so (Badescu 183). In less technical terms, individuals become civically engaged when they have what to offer, when they are motivated to do so and when they can do so. This, however, is a rather unclear list of factors explaining civic engagement due to their lack of contextualization. What kind of resources are the ones that are conducive to participation? What kind of availability from citizens is likely to lead to engagement? Do individuals who are lacking in resources fail to participate? Do people have to be motivated in similar

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patriarchal institution of female parenting as opposed to the more individualistically defined cultural-variant practice of mothering.

ways to come together for the benefit of their immediate communities? When are citizens not likely to be available? The present study aims to exemplify some of the resources, types of motivation and availability that are conducive to civic engagement understood in traditional terms, especially among women with young children.

To begin with, classic scholarly approaches to the study of mothering and civic participation are reviewed in order to highlight the conceptual inadequacies that inhibit scientific enquiry targeting the connections between these two activities. I then focus on feminist amendments to the study of mothering, offering a brief review of two different paradigms in the study of mothering, as well as feminist critiques of the social capital debate, followed by theoretical assertions that contribute to a more convenient conceptualization of civic engagement for the purpose of the current study. Finally I explore women's accounts regarding different aspects of their mothering that highlight changes in interests, attitudes, roles and activities. In addition, I include women's experiences as volunteers, their motivations and satisfactions, and, most important of all, their willingness and availability to resume voluntary civic activities after birth.

As a result, the goals of this article are threefold. First of all, I offer a theoretical framework that permits the study of the effects of mothering on civic participation of women, drawing on feminist theory of mothering, as well as critical assertions of feminist theorists of civic participation. Secondly, I examine the consequences of mothering on women's civic participation focusing on changes in women's interests, priorities, obligations, difficulties and burdens. This examination is based on six semi-structured interviews with new mothers who had engaged in voluntary activities prior to birth. Thirdly, I make a contribution to the newly emerging Romanian feminist literature regarding

theories of motherhood and the empirical research of the phenomenology of mothering

II. Mothering: politicizing the private sphere

Given the crucial role of mothering in ensuring the survival of the human race, it can arguably be considered as one of the oldest types of work humans, particularly women, have ever engaged (Herd & Harrington Meyer 666, Lorber 159). Implicitly, the institution of motherhood must be as old as the first most rudimentary societies. Throughout time and space, however, mothering practices changed profoundly, as did cultural norms, expectations and appreciation for mothering women, motherhood as status and mothering practices[3]. Moreover, the status of children and the care work children need from their parents, especially mothers, have varied greatly[4] (Lorber 153).

Cultural, economic and social factors have always been crafted into ideologically dominant discourses of children's worth or women's mothering and were often times legally codified, particularly in western European nations. The French Revolution and its aftermath led to significant changes in ideology regarding women's place in society as child-bearers and mothers, the production of new norms and expectations for mothering and the re-evaluation of

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3 I am avoiding the term, introduced by Ruddick, "maternal practices" for the tasks women have to perform caring for their children in order to signal the fact that such practices are not universal cross-culturally and over time.

4 See chapter 7, "Rocking the Cradle: Gendered Parenting" in Lorber's book for a generous account of various, historically diverse, attitudes towards children, as well as their worth to family and society, as well as Pedersen (Family, Dependence and the Origins of the Welfare State: Britain and France, 1914-1945. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993. Introduction) for maternalist and pro-natalist discourses in England and France.

childhood and children's value. Several factors contributed to this rather abrupt change in ideologies. The first of these, although not necessarily the most visible, were anatomic discoveries about the human body, particularly with regard to reproduction. Lacquer explains that until the mid-1700s, medicine did not distinguish between two biological sexes. That is to say, women's reproductive organs were considered to be the mere copy of the male ones, except placed inside the body (qtd. in Shilling 36). The progress of medicine, however, revealed differences in the ways reproductive organs functioned and the different ways in which men and women experienced their bodies. Two different sexes emerged as a result. This discovery was used to argue that women's bodies were too weak to perform any activities other than childbearing, and their place was, therefore, in the private sphere of the family. Nineteenth century developments in medicine reinforced other (mis)beliefs about women's bodies through the pathologization of natural processes and claims that the intellectual activity of women had the potential to leave them infertile (Jordanova qtd. in Shilling 35-36).

A second factor was a collective change in attitudes towards the individual in general. The French Revolution brought about the reevaluation of men and women as equal and free citizens, to be considered as constitutive elements of the ruling body politic or subjects rather than objects of political action. Children became future citizens overnight, a new status in its own right. It was at this time that philosophers and economists pointed to the necessity of women nursing and caring for their own children, future citizens (Lorber 145). Paradoxically, women's ability to give birth to future citizens and their new role as primary educators of the latter did not elevate them, symbolically or politically, to equal footing with men. However, this transformation of norms and expectations governing mothering shrank women's opportunities to maintain active roles in public life (Lorber 145).

A third factor was the opposition of bourgeois family institutions (e.g. marriage) to equalitarian principles brought along by the Enlightenment. Although men and women were in some circles considered to be equal, having the right, at least ideally, to enjoy full citizenship, economic and political interests of men interfered with such beliefs. In order to maintain men's control over women's property and income, marriage had to remain hierarchical, subordinating women to their husbands' will and interests (Vogel qtd. in Yuval-Davis & Werbner 6-7). Women, as a result, could not become citizens. Nineteenth century bourgeois norms reinforced and as a result strengthened the model of the secluded woman, subordinated to her husband, whose primary role was to give birth to heirs, but also raise "good" citizens. With middle and upper class women repudiated in their boudoirs where their reproductive abilities could not be jeopardized by intellectual and public engagements, the status of men was enhanced by the entitlements women could not enjoy. That is to say, all the responsibilities of active citizenship located in the public sphere (Yuval-Davis & Werbner 6).

These factors strongly contributed to the establishment of the modern gender dichotomy operating at an individual and institutional level. The separation and hierarchic ranking of the private and the public that many societies across the world have internalized and deemed desirable as a social model, originating in the ideas of Enlightenment, has survived over time. This separation is produced and reproduced on a daily basis, at an individual and institutional level. Social research over the past century has taken this dichotomy for granted, avoiding the investigation of much of what takes place within families. Although women can be seen to play a greater role in politics and public life nowadays, child-centered models of mothering and the mother-centered model of parenting remain in place in many European societies, arguably Romania, as well. In different ways and

to different extents, women are still confined to the cradle even if they hold jobs and support their families, while men remain entrenched in the provider's role even when they are not the actual providers.

One of the most common, culturally embedded assumptions about the relationship between the privacy of the family and the various dimensions of public life is the implied *solidarity* of the family. This entails the notion of a unitary, cohesive social unit within which interests coincide and glosses over the potential for disagreement and conflict within the family unit. In addition to intra-family conflicts, this assumption turns a blind eye on the different emotional, physical and even financial investments that men and women within the family have to make. Firstly, women parent much more intensely than men do, hence their frequent financial dependence and as a consequence of their responsibility for domestic duties, experience higher degrees of stress and have less time for leisure. It must be noted that men tend to carry a greater financial burden once married[5] (Marx Ferree 867). A second assumption, already illustrated, concerns the notion of there being two separate public and private spheres. The most important conceptual implication of this is that relationships within the family, as well as the family as a unit, are seen as only indirectly affected by political or economic factors, and vice-versa. In other words, viewing the family and the economy as directly or indirectly related can be seen as hindering social enquiry. To illustrate, research around domestic violence or prostitution in the traditional paradigm will approach these

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5   For a more illustrative exemplification of how the mentioned tasks differ for men and women in Romania, see the result of the Barometrul de Gen (Gender Barometer), Open Society Foundation at http://www.gallup.ro/romana/poll_ro/releases_ro/pr030411_ro/pr030411_ro.htm, Chapter 2 (Private Life), accessed 17th October 2007.

phenomena as individual issues and find explanations in upbringing, personal deviancy, stress factors, disadvantaged socio-economic background, thus avoiding the investigation of macro-social factors, e.g. economic or legal, that can contribute to the maintenance of such practices within the so-called private sphere, such as the lack of laws punishing domestic violence (Marx Ferree 866-867).

The gap between the two spheres has been guiding enquiries of civic participation until the late 1990's, as well. Although women's care for their husbands and especially children translates into the upbringing of able, knowledgeable, active and involved citizens, this dimension of citizenship has remained unnoticed (Herd & Harrington Meyer 669). The decline of civic participation in the US has been addressed by scholars whose explanations can be seen to fall under one of three different paradigms: civic engagement, social capitalism, moralism and historic institutionalism. All of these have remained silent about women's care work as a valuable contribution to participatory democracy (Herd & Harrington Meyer 667-669).

Putnam, one of the most vocal social capitalist theorists of civic participation, has defined civic participation primarily as official membership in formal organizations coupled with "active and involved membership" (e.g. attendance at organization's meetings, taking leadership roles within the organization, working for the various committees of the organization etc.). He also referred to the percentage of money spent by people on causes and associations as a good indicator of civic participation (Putnam 49-63). Although this definition should not automatically disqualify women's work in the community, the focus of Putnam's empirical analysis, subsequently employed by other researchers, as well, has been on organizations traditionally dominated by men (sports clubs, veterans' and fraternal associations, professional associations etc.), and as a consequence led

to the neglect of women's engagement and participation in the wider community. In addition, discussions around civic participation have tended to overlook informal and grassroots initiatives, especially the self-help and spontaneous arrangements that women with dependent children, particularly those from working class and/or minority communities, tend to rely on (Lowndes 534-535).

Neither moralists, nor historical institutionalists target the work carried out within families and bring into discussion the different ways in which men and women contribute to the welfare of their communities. Although moralists do believe that the family, in its nuclear, heterosexual and monogamous form, is the "cradle of citizenship", they seem disinterested in discussing the different work men and women within the family do in order to reproduce and enact active citizenship (Herd & Harrington Meyer 668). Traditional gender roles appear to permeate many civic engagement theorists' visions of the family, deeming the private sphere of the family and its customary daily activities irrelevant to civic participation.

As we have seen in this section, mothering as a practice and the gendered institution of motherhood have been subject to transformations throughout time and space due to a variety of cultural, economic, social and legal factors. Traditionally, research in the social sciences has operated with the assumption of two distinct spheres of human activity, the public and the private overlapping with the masculine-feminine gender dichotomy, resulting in the neglect of several phenomena of social organization. Reviewing the literature on family studies, as well as more recent debates regarding civic engagement especially in democratic states, it has become clear that mainstream approaches to the study of family dynamics and mothering on the one hand and the study of political phenomena on the other hand are inadequate to study connections between these two. To illustrate, mainstream scholarly literature of

civic participation is oblivious to the domestic work women do and which contributes to the growth of politically active and involved citizens. Moreover, mainstream scholarly literature of the family neglects implications of domestic work for women, remaining blind to the fact that this often inhibits the latter to become politically engaged. In the following section I propose a more adequate approach to the study of the connections between mothering and civic engagement.

III. Care Work as Civic Engagement

Mainstream theoretical approaches to the study of both mothering and civic participation have proved to be inadequate for the study of the connections between these two engagements of citizens. The aim of this section is to offer an alternative theoretical framework for the investigation of mothering and its effects on civic participation by (1) reviewing contributions of feminist scholars to the research of women's mothering, including major changes in paradigms regarding the research of women's mothering, (2) highlighting the reasons for which feminist understandings of mothering are suitable in investigating connections between mothering and various actions of individuals as citizens, and (3) including feminist critiques of mainstream understandings and analyses of civic engagement with a focus on the social capital debate as formulated by Putnam.

Central to the contemporary feminist paradigm and dominating theoretical and scientific enquiries of mothering in North America is the concept of gender (Arendell 1193). As Acker points out, gender denotes the "pervasive ordering of human activities, practices, and social structures in terms of differentiations between women and men." (567) Understanding gender as a principle of social organization rather than as a biologically defined fact shifts our understandings of men and women. Instead of viewing

men and women as biologically different individuals, they are conceived as social beings whose activities, roles and expected behaviors are socially constructed and carry shared meanings. Furthermore, men and women risk socially crafted sanctions if they challenge these complexities of the gender order. In addition, our understandings of human institutions, e.g. marriage, motherhood, care and work also change: instead of investigating the biological aspects that pregnancy, birth and post-partum care entail, mothering practices, norms, imagery, distributions of power and the dynamics that result from these become the focus of social scientists' enquiries.

Theoretical approaches to mothering, as well as the phenomenology of this social practice have been receiving increasing scientific attention over the past forty years, evolving in tandem with the unfolding of feminist theory (Marx Ferree 867-870, Arendell 1193). Snitow identifies the birth of genuine feminist thought on mothering in the period between 1976 and 1979, arguing that "[i]n these years the feminist work of exploring motherhood took off, both about the daily experience … and about motherhood's most far-reaching implications." (38) There appears to be agreement of understandings of mothering in feminist scholarship providing a minimal definition for mothering as "the social practices of nurturing and caring for dependent children" (Arendell 1192). However, this basic definition tells us little about the meanings, visibility and appreciation residing in these practices from society to society; the changes that mothering as a physical, emotional and social experience brings about in women's lives; or the way women's relationships with their environment change as a result of mothering.

Feminist theory recognizes the close ties between gendered power structures within the family and wider systems of gender dominance, thus encouraging empirical

research focusing on women in the labor market, women at their jobs and the impact of social policies (or the lacks of the latter) on women from different socio-economic backgrounds (Snitow 39-41). Of interest to contemporary feminist scholars have been culturally specific practices, norms, dynamics, behaviors that apply to individuals who mother and which are conducive to the understanding of experiences and implications of motherhood in women's lives (Arendell 1193).

Two paradigms have emerged in the feminist study of the phenomenology of mothering. The likes of Ruddick profess a universalist approach to mothering and argue that all women caring for young children engage in what she defines as maternal practices: nurture, protection, teaching and training of her child (qtd. in Arendell 1194). Although the forms of these activities tend to be highly circumstantial, varying from person to person, they tend to be universal because infants have a supposedly common set of basic needs. In other words, women perform the same maternal practices, although differently, because they need to meet an invariable set of demands from their babies (Arendell 1194). Mothers aim to achieve the same thing and as a result, their everyday practices are to be considered universal.

Dill and Glenn, on the other hand, stress the importance of cultural and socio-economic factors in mothering practices, arguing that the emotional and physical connection between mother and child is strongly dependent on these (qtd. in Arendell 1195). These authors argue that everyday mothering practices and strategies that women of different socio-economic standing, color, race and sexual orientation perform are strongly shaped by their specific social contexts. That is to say, the universality of mothers' bodily experiences and their children's' needs are overruled by the constraints individual mothers experience as a result of their particular status. Class, race, color, sexual preference

can strongly influence the care, protection and attention that new mothers offer their newborns, especially when these mothers find themselves in a perpetual struggle for survival and a legitimately accepted identity (Arendell 1195).

The claims of these two paradigms highlight not only the complexities of mothering as a social practice, but explore different dimensions of mothering as a personal experience which can be seen to be strongly shaped by personal and social circumstances. The particularistic approach to mothering has the virtue of stressing the importance of macro-social factors in shaping not only the experience, but the practice of mothering, as well. Therefore it is this approach that I deem adequate for the study of mothering and its implications for mothers' civic engagement. It is this perspective of mothering that is sensitive to mothers' individual circumstances, and is best able to illustrate the factors involved in becoming or remaining civically engaged.

So far, empirical research targeting the effects of mothering on women's public lives as citizens has been rare. Gender-sensitive analyses of civic participation were lacking until the 1990's when Putnam, writing about the decline of civic engagement in American society and the importance of citizens' engagement for healthy democratic life, initiated a heated debate about social capital and, implicitly, civic engagement. It was at this time that feminist scholars contributed to the discussion by signaling the lack of a truly critical understanding of women's participation in public life, the nature of their involvement and, finally, the exclusion of many forms of women's activities that – given their capacity to build social capital as Putnam understands it - ought to be counted as forms of civic engagement (Lowndes 534).

Herd and Harrington Meyer have brought under scrutiny the very definitions of civic engagement by arguing that care work, defined as "the daily physical and emotional labor of feeding and nurturing citizens" in an active form of civic

engagement and has long-term positive implications within society (666). Their first argument is that women's care and support at home provide men with valuable time, energy and resources to become civically engaged, contributing towards the welfare of their communities. This appears to be true for children, as well (672). Simply put, women's unpaid care work within the household seems to be a resource for the other members of the family when it comes to civic engagement. Secondly, care work can be viewed – especially in post-industrial western societies – as a form of voluntary and altruistic activity, similar in content with any other such activity citizens perform in their communities (675). This argument, originating in a feminist theory of citizenship, is, however, problematic given western societies' dominant ideologies regarding parenting. These ideologies promote a child-centered, self-less and emotionally rewarding experience which serves to exclude public dimensions of childrearing. The question that arises then is whether one can view women's intensive mothering as a form of civic engagement when mothers themselves do not legitimate such a conceptualization of what they do?

It has been highlighted by feminist writers that the focus on male dominated activities and the exclusion of informal social capital generating activities of women, (especially those of working women raising young children) has rendered these activities invisible. Lowndes criticizes research carried out in the United Kingdom regarding civic participation on three counts. Firstly, for its neglect in analyzing voluntary work and informal sociability, referring only to formal membership in associations as civic participation. Secondly, for its gender-blindness in exploring the nature of men's and women' involvement. Thirdly, for the overwhelming attention given to traditionally male-dominated activities while avoiding traditionally female activities, e.g. childcare (Lowndes 533-535). In keeping with these criticisms, Greene

reports on the negative effects of the strictly defined notion of "active citizenship" grounding social programs aimed towards the social and political involvement of marginalized groups. She argues that strict definitions of active citizenship serve to pose barriers to specific marginalized groups or individuals at risk, such as teenage single mothers (168). What she proposes is an alternative conceptualization of the concept, a "continuum of active citizenship" that would raise awareness of teenage lone mothers' contributions and struggles to become active citizen on a par with mainstream groups of British society (176-178).

Furthermore, recent feminist theorizing has highlighted a spectrum of factors that hinder women's engagement in public or community matters, for instance public (lack of) safety (Caiazza), self-respect and appreciation (Greene), social capital of the community[6] (Caiazza & Putnam), lack of recognition (Herd & Harrington Meyer, Greene), increased economic hardships due to mothering (Herd & Harrington Meyer, Putnam), responsibility for domestic chores or paid work (Herd & Harrington Meyer 670-672). Chances that some or all of the above factors will hinder women in remaining or getting civically involved are enhanced by other individual particularities such as class, race, color, ethnic background, education, marital status, and sexual orientation (Arendell 1195). Paid work out of necessity is likely to negatively affect traditional forms of civic participation and scarcity of economic resources will also hinder women in becoming or remaining civically engaged (Herd & Harrington Meyer 670-671). Fatigue, stress and sickness, arising from overwhelming duties as caregivers affect civic participation negatively, as

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6   By social capital, Caiazza and Putnam understand "connections among individuals – social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them" quoting Putnam in Bowling Alone.

well, and women are more inclined to experience this than men (Herd & Harrington Meyer 671). Interestingly enough, however, childrearing seems to positively affect participation among parents with school-aged children: Putnam reports that volunteering is particularly high among these adults (Putnam 119).

Romanian authors of civic participation, e.g. Badescu, have also neglected the gendered nature of civic participation, remaining silent about ways in which gender in Romania influences participation, the types of activities men and women are engaged in, trust that men and women garner for a variety of different institutions and their attitudes towards political objects. There is an evident need to fill in this gap by looking into men's and women's involvement, their motivations, as well as structural factors that shape civic engagement in this country. The present study is one of the first contributions in developing an understanding of this phenomenon.

Motherhood is one of the most enduring gendered institutions in contemporary societies and its direct and indirect relations with other ideas, practices and institutions, citizenship in particular, must be recognized. Feminist assertions of mothering have proved to be particularly useful in an attempt to find a common ground to study the implications of this activity for new mother's civic engagement. Moreover, feminist critiques of the civic engagement debate, dominated by the social capitalist paradigm, have highlighted important omissions with regard to women's particular contributions to a politically active and civically involved citizenry. A view central to this study is that women's care work, both of spouse and children, is considered to be a form of civic participation along with mainstream definitions of civic engagement. It is to be noted that women may have engaged in both alternatively or concomitantly. Particular attention is given to factors around

employment and marital status when analyzing the mothers' accounts of their childrearing experiences and mapping out the complexity of factors inhibiting them to remain actively involved in voluntary activities.

IV. Mothering among civically active women in Cluj Napoca

Both Lowndes, in her critical overview of the social capitalist debate as an explanation to the decline of civic participation in the United Kingdom, and Arendell, reviewing the feminist scholarly literature of the 1980's about mothering and motherhood, signal the necessity for more case studies and "personal histories" for two ends relevant here: (1) to better understand ways in which individuals and groups use social and civic networks in politics and the extent to which these networks are vehicles for participation; (2) to better map out the intricacies of mothering and its diverse impacts, as well as give voices to women engaging in care work (Lowndes 536, Arendell 1202).

As Herd and Harrington Meyer so candidly point out, there are only 24 hours in a day and care work, especially upon the arrival of a newborn, can require much of it (670). Research in the United States has shown that two of the lead factors inhibiting women from participating is lack of time and shrinkage of disposable income as a result of unpaid care work (Herd & Harrington Meyer 670-671). Another factor that these authors mention is fatigue and stress that are direct results of laboring domestically (672). The focus of this study is not only the identification of factors that hinder women in their wishes to participate. Rather, I want to expose how these different factors shaping women's particular situations shape their priorities, interests, necessities and availability. I argue that the fewer options women have in shaping their own activities, priorities and interests, the less they will be available to become civically involved after the arrival of their child.

1. Who are the women?

When defining the profile of my interviewees, I chose volunteering as a measure for their civic participation instead of official membership in formal organizations for two reasons. Firstly, because Putnam defines civic participation as "active and involved membership" in formal organizations and associations rather than official membership which, as he points out, often involves no human interaction and production of social capital (58). Secondly, Putnam explains how voluntary actions predict philanthropy and other altruistic dispositions. Individuals interested in politics and voluntary action are more likely to associate with other citizens to attain a communal goal (35). Volunteering has the virtue, then, of being a good measure of civic engagement. A second criterion of selection was that their children had to be not older than four. The reason for this is that by this age, children will attend kindergarten and women will have resumed their pre-leave positions as Romanian legislation stipulated that women can stay home on leave, with their position reserved for them by their employers, for two years maximum.

I carried out semi-structured interviews with six women in Cluj between April and August. I had personally known three of them prior to my research; one of the women was recommended to me by a member of Pro Democracy Association, Cluj branch; the fifth interviewee answered my posting on Parinticlujeni.ro, a forum for parents in Cluj and the sixth mother was recommended by the previous one. Of the six, two were the mothers of children above the age of three and the other four had babies whose ages ranged between six and twelve months. They all hold bachelor's degrees, although three of the six earned their degrees after giving birth and therefore were not entitled to the government aid that women in the labor market receive upon entering motherhood. These three young women had never held jobs

and therefore completely lacked financial independence. Despite this, all of them enjoy relative well-being due to the support of their immediate families and/or husbands. With the exception of one woman, all of them have one child and their experiences revealed in the interviews reflect the unprecedented nature of this experience, role and status, as well.

Four of the women regularly volunteered for non-governmental organizations whose focus was on children of all ages, including high school students. Activities ranged from socialization and play to counseling and sex education. Another woman is a board member of a high profile non-governmental organization in Romania while the sixth interviewee mobilized local resources for the proposition of a law targeting child welfare in Romania. This distribution enforces Lowndes' observations regarding the gendered nature of civic engagement: women tend to invest energy and time in social-orientated activities (534).

2. Personal implications of motherhood

The particularistic perspective of mothering, theorized by Dill and Glenn, highlights the crucial importance of the complexity of factors encountered daily as regards women's mothering practices, the way they decide to structure their lives around their care work, the strategies they adopt to cope and the way they relate to a variety of social objects in their environments. These factors are diverse and differ from woman to woman. One's own financial situation, that of the family, (lack of) help with childcare and domestic work, housing arrangements, marital status, intellectual resources, social connectedness etc. are micro level factors affecting women's mothering. Macro level factors include the accessibility of the health care system, the existence and scope of medical services, availability of maternal leave, its duration, payment schemes for mothers on leave,

policy incentives for childbirth etc. as well as more elusive elements, such as dominant ideologies of mothering, gender norms, relative power relations within couples, share of unpaid care work etc. Our attention here focalizes upon the specific ways in which all of these intermingle and create a complex situation in which women find themselves compelled to reevaluate their availability to become civically involved.

The physicality of mothering

The physical implications of mothering seem to completely elude the collective consciousness, especially the degree to which women's new experiences regarding their bodies, moods, tasks, the newborn etc. affect much of how they feel about everything else. In the interviews, I aimed to explore women's attitudes and feelings towards their own bodies in change. Responses varied from abhorrence to enjoyment. One mother said:

> The thing with putting on weight … I did expect to put on weight, but I also expected I would lose it. And that was indeed pretty shocking, you know, that every month fatter, another two kilos, and then another two. … So that – I could predict. But it was rather shocking. … To me this fat thing is the most bothersome, the fact that I am fat.

A similar experience was revealed by one of the student mothers, who was rather disconcerted regarding her own figure.

> I don't like myself now, my body at the moment. Before [pregnancy] I used to be content … I never thought I had a chubby belly or big bottoms. I thought of myself as good looking and liked myself.

Others experienced their bodies with much greater emotional comfort. One mother in particular reported the emotional rewards of pregnancy originating in the promise of growing and staying plumper as a result of childbearing.

Negative experiences regarding changes in weight, aspect and looks affect women's moods and their relationships with themselves. Some of them reported they felt guilty for not disciplining themselves better in working out a training plan, but at the same time felt constrained to spend the time and money for their gym membership on their child. It is clear that women's bodily experiences resulting from pregnancy put women in a complex moral dilemma, enhanced by the lack of other resources (often financial): they feel fat or uncomfortable in their bodies, know they would have to take action, but lack time, energy, money to do so. They feel guilty not recovering from pregnancy and childbirth, but they also feel guilty about the idea of spending time and money on a gym membership or other ways of getting into shape. As one woman said:

> I would love to do something about it, but I cannot find the time, my own resources to do it.

This discontentedness was augmented by what some women encounter immediately after birth and what is clinically called post-partum depression. Of six women asked, three reported they thought or knew they had suffered from post-partum depression, although not one of them had been diagnosed. Although this condition is thought to be a hormonal disturbance, women made accounts of panic attacks, feelings of loneliness and desertion, a sense that the whole burden of mothering rests on their shoulders solely etc. They seemed to have conceptualized it in very personal terms: their own singular experience of post-partum depression rather than a condition that other women suffer from, including themselves.

I also had this post-partum depression and other stress problems because I gave birth with a c-section and I had never conceived this before birth. I had never prepared myself for it. … I also did not manage to actually nurse, although I would have wanted, naturally, I would have wanted to. At the beginning I had a very hard time … It was a traumatic experience for me.

This personal construction of the condition seems to be caused by the intensity of the experience: it is a completely new encounter to most women and it manifests itself in feelings of worthlessness, emotional vulnerability, complete lack of motivation and drive for routine activities, often times feelings of inadequacy towards the care of the newborn etc. It is not surprising then that these women's inclinations to resume their voluntary work they had invested dedication and energy in prior to childbirth completely lack. It is evident that the emotional experiences that women encounter as a result of pregnancy and childbirth – I am not referring to the emotional work that women invest in the care and training of their children – are in themselves a unique and often hindering experience to any sort of activity women would "normally" engage in.

In addition to feelings of discontentedness, inadequacy and sometimes guilt, another factor that seems to contribute to women's unavailability is exhaustion. An explanation is necessary here: interviewees all mothered in accordance with norms of intensive mothering: they felt it was their duty to care for their babies selflessly, permanently and – as much as they could physically cope with – individually, even at the cost of their physical, emotional, professional well-being. What seems to be at work among all of these women is a clear pattern of culturally induced norms, expectations and the very definitions of motherhood. Most of these women expressed their absolute wish to be the sole

caretakers of their newborns, especially the women who had been married for several years, were approaching thirty and had planned their first babies thoroughly. One of them was even considering giving up her well paying job as a software developer and become a schoolteacher instead to adjust her schedule to that of her child when he was old enough to go to kindergarten. With the exception of one interviewee, none of the women had a strong desire to pursue career goals for their own individual satisfactions.

Due to the salience of this model of motherhood, most women were complaining of being constantly tired, physically and mentally drained. One of women explained:

> I had never thought I would have to give up my sleep, vital, because I am the kind of person who, if does not get enough sleep, cannot do anything. And this was the thing I had the hardest time giving up. … At least the morning sleep. The child wakes up at 7 and, boom, you have to get up and start working around the house. … Anyway, the [lack] of morning sleep kills me.

Another woman explained how exhaustion contributes to the breakdown of interpersonal relations as well, leading not only to awkward situations, but also to the weakening of social ties within the community.

> Neither of my kids slept at night for the first year and three months. So there were around three years not slept. I would start telling a joke to one of my friends, I'd get to the middle of what I was to say and I would forget the punch line. And I'd make myself look completely stupid. … I have to be ten times more careful than before because my brain doesn't work as it used to.

The two women with older children I asked said that exhaustion was an issue as long as one nursed, up to the age of one. Afterwards, women could resume their usual rest at

night. However, among women with young children, fatigue can prolong post-partum depression and contributes to the alteration of daily dynamics, as well as women's habits. Readjusting one's schedule, i.e. "going back to normal" can often be a challenge to women who – although getting their sleep – do remain primarily responsible for the welfare of their babies.

Other individual factors can also contribute to an overall sense of despair, inadequacy or simply frustration on a daily basis in the first periods of mothering: inability to nurse; complete lack of experience with childcare combined with the lack of initial assistance and poor coping strategies; lack of the partner's involvement and solitude; being confined to the home and/or being less mobile; restricted access in the public space or "segregated" children's parks etc. All of these contribute to the discomfort of the environment in the wealth of situations in which women find themselves in as fresh mothers.

Financial dependence and its implications

As mentioned earlier, three of the six interviewees were undergraduate university students in their final year when giving birth. An important implication of this fact was that they were not entitled to enjoy the financial benefits that fresh graduates and earning women do[7]. Their particular situations are relevant for this study in three ways: (1) they

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7 Current Romania legislation stipulates that at the birth of a child, one of the parents has the right to go on maximum 2 years of parental leave and monthly receive a fixed allowance of 800 RON provided he or she has legally worked 12 months prior to the birth of the child. Recent university graduates who fall under the unemployment scheme also enjoy these benefits. The text of the Government ordinance can be found at http://www.mmssf.ro/website/ro/legi/pensii/OUG148.jsp in Romanian. Accessed 3rd October 2007.

reveal the complexities of a particular situation of financial dependency and its implications; and (2) highlight the flaws of Romanian legislation in the fields of parent support in childcare.

As mentioned earlier, all of the women interviewed live comfortable lives and neither of them has been forced to work in order to ensure the livelihood of the family. All women are married and the student mothers were actively supported by their parents or in-laws (financially, in care work or both). In spite of this, money and financial arrangements seemed to not be an issue for one mother only and another found herself comfortable in her complete dependency upon her husband and parents. These two interviewees were also the ones who either remained engaged in spite of their pregnancy and childbirth or expressed a variety of possibilities for engagement they envisaged as soon as their child was old enough to socialize.

Financial arrangements in which women are dependent on others seem to be predicaments not only to women's availability to become civically engaged, but they also seem to put pressure and compel them to change priorities against their will. One of the student mothers explained that her contribution to the household and the care of the child was in fact her regular allowance from her mother.

> Because I did not have my own financial situation, I was dependent on [my husband], my mother. … I had to beg. … I feel insecure about myself for the simple reason that I cannot buy [my son] anything. Powdered milk: "Hi, mom, we've run out of powdered milk. Could you please send us some money for powdered milk? … Be financially prepared [for the child]. … The woman should have her own income.

As a result of a financial arrangement in which she does not contribute anything, she is the one whose job is to care

for the baby at all times. This, however, often leaves her dissatisfied and tired, but also feeling dependent, somewhat humiliated and guilty for being unable to provide for her family as well. As a result, her priorities have changed in ways she did not wish them to: although she would like to get involved in voluntary activities, she feels compelled and indebted to her family to look for a job instead.

The other student mother, living together with her in-laws and with a husband with no income, illustrated similar concerns. However, in her case, the proximity of senior family members appeared to have been a positive contribution to her return into the realm of voluntary work. In spite of the relative independence this young mother enjoyed due to the involvement of her family members in the care of her child, her priorities overrode her interests and she too found herself in the position to look for full time employment.

The two senior mothers interviewed revealed radically different circumstances. Living in independent households, bearing responsibility for a variety of different expenses, including a large household in case of one woman in particular, and having a job, the issues and dilemmas these women faced in regard to their respective financial situations was different from that of dependent student mothers. With three children to raise, one of the interviewees had no choice but to return to work as soon as she could.

> I have been working since he was one month old. I am lucky with an employer who is understanding. … Otherwise you cannot afford to have three children and not know how you'll raise them afterwards.

In spite of this flexibility, she hired a nanny to stay with her youngest as soon as she stopped nursing. In her situation, she was compelled to stay active at her job because of the size of her family. The other interviewee preferred to return to work after only nine months of leave for personal reasons,

but her choice was enhanced by the fact that she could earn an extra salary in addition to her maternal allowance from the state.

Another important aspect of women's financial situation is the way their environment relates to it: women seem to be expected to cope with it, figure it out for themselves.

> It is my personal problem, really, because it doesn't bother [my husband] to support me and the family. So when I feel it bothers me, it is my own personal problem. … I bothers me [that I am not earning money] especially because I have always been more independent.

This shows once more how invisible issues associated with women's mothering, especially when this entails a disproportionate amount of care work in the detriment of paid labor, are in the public consciousness.

Women's individual stories cast light upon the inadequacies of the parental support policy in place in Romania currently, as well. Student mothers' experiences highlight two drawbacks: (1) the discriminatory nature of the policy; and (2) the structural impediments it creates for young mothers, fresh university graduates. To address the first assertion, it is to be noted that the way Romanian legislation regarding parental allowance and leave is formulated clearly excludes women engaged in higher education training from enjoying parental rights on no grounds. Young women's student status seems to be a channel to the infringement of their rights and entitlements as citizens. As far as structural impediments are concerned, student mothers – even if they do graduate shortly after their child's birth – remain excluded from financial benefits other recent graduates are entitled to. In addition, they spend longer or shorter periods of time mothering, staying away from employment. Although for working women maternal leave is registered as a period worked, contributing to the number of years actively spent

in the labor market, women who had their children before engaging in formal employment are not entitled to this form of social benefits, either. To sum up, the current Romanian policy on parental leave and financial support overtly creates a structural disadvantage to women who have never had the chance to stay in the labor market for twelve months before the birth of their first child.

Play or work: the ideology of motherhood

Women – especially women with children – tend to conceive of free time (or play time, dedicated to one' entertainment and leisure) as the time away from home and the child.

> Going to university, going for a coffee with colleagues … This is my free time. Without the kid. My free time if outside the home. At this point, leisure time for me means leaving the kid behind. Definitely.

Paradoxically enough, though, only one of the interviewees would depict mothering as work and wished the Romanian social system enacted a way to pay women for their care work.

> I think we pay enough taxes to be able to put aide money for this [professional motherhood] and we spend so much money on rubbish anyway … I think the fact that women stay home and … raise healthy children for society seems to be a much better investment. Later they will work, pay taxes and the children will do the same things …

Most frequently, women's understanding of work is that of paid labor, something that creates a good that can have a price on the market. With the rise of the ideology of the "priceless child" in the late eighteenth and mid-nineteenth centuries in developed western societies, the emotional work

of mothering women disappeared from public consciousness, leaving women and men confused about where parenting really fits in (Lorber 149-153). Interviewees' reactions to the conceptualizing of motherhood as work reflected this confusion, as well as its contradictory nature:

> Practically, work means a profit to someone. It is a different kind of work, a work which is void of profit and that is 24-7. It is work, if you define it that way … I would rather say it is motherhood. It is work too, but it is motherhood to a much greater extent. … So it is hard to call it work.

Although the above reflection points at the inadequacy of mainstream social ideology regarding motherhood in defining its status vis-à-vis other activities, it also illustrates the fact that much more is involved in mothering than work. In fact, the confusion around this status and role may be caused by the artificial dichotomy it builds between play and work. "Much more is involved [in mothering], activity that cannot easily be dichotomized into play or work. Helping another to develop, the gradual relinquishing of control, the experiencing of the human limits of one's actions – all these are important features of women's activity as mothers." (Hartsock qtd. in Lorber 159). Where does motherhood fit in then? It is not work, but it is, and it is exciting and fun, but often it is not.

As mentioned earlier, most interviewees said that motherhood should not be considered on a par with paid labor. However, the state should encourage and support parents in having and raising children.

> No … It should not be considered work. Like a job? No! Society should encourage mothers to take care of their own children for their own reasons and initiative. Not to be paid to take care of them. … It is not like you are raising someone else's child and someone gives you money as an allowance to do that.

It is clear that women's opinions regarding the locus of motherhood in a wider social order are fuelled by understandings of their own roles as mothers to their children. Naturally, they cannot conceive of their mothering, which entails unprecedented emotional input of maternal love, supposed to be natural and unconditional, as work, often done without passion or as a trade off for a more comfortable life. However, women have revealed that caring for a young child excludes many (most) forms of out of the home socialization and that free time is virtually inexistent unless there are other individuals, usually women, who act as mothers' replacements. Mothering is a 24-hour job and it appears that there are no breaks from it.

Mothers' civic engagement

One of the central interests of this study is to illustrate women's availability to get involved civically after the arrival of their children, as well, irrespective of whether their engagement reflects their status as mothers or not. Although the interviewed women's focus, priorities and to a certain extent interests did change as a result of childbirth and the inherent changes in schedule, free time, availability of resources, these women expressed great interest in getting involved in the future. However, they believed they could actively participate in certain circumstances that, provided the particular situations of some of them, seemed unlikely to materialize.

> Hard to tell. If I had someone to stay with him for a couple of hours a day and my involvement would not require a presence longer than a couple of hours, I would definitely do it.

However, for a young mother completely dependent financially on her immediate family, who in turn expect her to be the caretaker of her child or find a job, the prospect of a nanny to replace her while away for unpaid business seems

highly unlikely. Student mothering and its implications I discussed in section b. appear to affect women's availability for later civic engagement in other ways as well:

> I have only ever worked as a volunteer … I will get involved on a voluntary basis to help others who have helped me in the past … I don't think we will volunteer for other organizations because we simply don't have the time to do it. … I am talking of mutual help and being thankful here.

The significant input of time, energy and resources into voluntary actions before the arrival of the child, as well as the drawbacks of a financially unassisted early motherhood definitely changed this young mother's priorities regarding her individual resources: it is much more important to her to find a paid position than remain the dedicated volunteer she so much enjoyed as a student. One interesting aspect that the experience of this woman reveals, however, is that she is dedicated in capitalizing her experience she gained as a volunteer. In this sense, her unavailability to volunteer can also be seen as a sign of maturation: moving away from an experimental phase into a more professional phase that can even bring her income.

Some of the women interviewed spent time doing what they had done before childbirth even in the presence of their newborn. One of the student mothers, whose husband was the president of a rapidly growing student organization, actually talked about how she took on smaller tasks she could perform on the computer, evading from her child for short periods of time when the baby was asleep. She said that as the child grew older, she could accompany her husband in a wider diversity of activities along with the child.

Another interviewee's experience also revealed the fact that comebacks to voluntary engagement despite the presence of a young child are possible. She spoke at length

about the intellectual and personal rewards that her serving on the board of a prestigious non-governmental organization offered. Because her knowledge and expertise were so highly valued and she could put them to use for a wide variety of beneficial activities, she found herself highly compelled to spend time and energy on tasks she was offered. In addition, what seemed to appeal to her was the networking and collaboration with other highly skilled, successful and intelligent individuals.

Apart from the two student mothers whose financial situations were the most disadvantageous, all women appeared to be keen on returning to voluntary activities or enhancing their involvement as their child grew. This finding resonates with findings from the United States that Herd and Harrington Meyer presented in their study, namely that financial burdens that compel women to work out of obligation negatively impact participation. In addition, women who have the option or the resources to pass on some of the care work childrearing entails to others are much more inclined to get involved that those – in this case the same two student mothers – who don't have the choice to do so.

V. Conclusions

Data collected for the present study aimed to map out various dimensions of women's mothering in Cluj whose personal histories were intertwined with different forms of civic engagement prior to childbirth. The intention of this study was to illustrate – in as much detail as was available – the complexity of factors that play a role in shaping women's actual ability to become civically engaged once the burden of care work for children is present. The enquiry was founded on several assumptions, the first of which was that middle class Romanian women's mothering portrays quite well the theoretical model of intensive mothering. Interviewees' accounts of their own mothering enforced this

assumption. A second one, building on the first concerning intensive mothering, was that intensive mothering consumes not only women's physical and emotional resources, but interferes with women's opinions, interests, priorities and availability for non-family related activities. Although changes in priorities and to a certain extent changes did occur after childbirth and the early stages of childrearing, women remained interested to taking up voluntary activities, again. A third assumption was that women's involvement – especially after childbirth – would be highly dependent on a different factors, such as financial dependency and disposable income, a disproportionately high amount of domestic work, energy and health. The bulk of data analysis provided in the present study in fact explored how these different determinants shape women's availability to actively exercise their membership in the body politic.

Women's stories revealed that motherhood is – first of all – tremendous emotional work in itself, doubled by the novelty of emotional and physical ties with the baby that consolidate after birth. Often, women are unable to cope and suffer from depression and exhaustion, which in turn feed into a variety of different feelings most of which tend to wear out women even more. This understudied dimension of motherhood appears to play a crucial role in how women's priorities and interests change over time. Financial dependency, created by a mixture of individual, as well as structural factors, is another determinant of women's availability for active citizenship after birth. The more financially dependent women are, the less liberty they have in shaping their opportunities and priorities. Women who do not earn or are not entitled to parental allowances are forced to take on the role of the home-maker, at least temporarily and when the opportunity arises to get out of the domestic realm, it is often into the labor market, leaving hardly any time for a diversity of other activities. A third

factor seems to be ideological: the normative model of mothering, at least among middle class nuclear families, is that of intensive mothering: child-centered, demanding and neglectful towards the independence and well-being of the mother. All of the interviewed mothers, to a greater or lesser extent, saw this as the sole acceptable mode of childrearing in spite of the fact that often times they found themselves struggling, even traumatized by certain elements of it.

The relationships between mothering and active citizenship in the form of voluntary engagement in activities aimed at the welfare of the community are far-reaching and complex. In fact, I found that given the many similarities between the women interviewed for the purpose of the present study, findings reveal aspects that may be valid for only a limited number of Romanian citizens. It is likely that fresh mothers' participation in rural Romania is crucially different from that of these well-educated, urban mothers or that experiences of women from more disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds will reveal a more complex connection between scarcity of resources and civic engagement. This study surely brings to light just a fraction of the links that exist between mothering as a culturally specific individual activity as notions of participatory democracy.

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CHURCHES AND CIVIC ACTIVISM IN ROMANIA. HOW ORTHODOXY SHAPES ROMANIA'S FUTURE

Wolfgang STUPPERT

Nearly 20 years after the Iron Curtain fell, it seems save to say that the outspokenly atheist communist regimes have not been able to weaken the churches' societal position in all the East European societies in a lasting manner. Since the democratic revolutions, in many countries in Eastern Europe the churches have been gaining ground again. Most notably in Poland, Romania and Russia, they have returned as major societal actors, shaping the new democracies' future. Nevertheless, the social differentiation and political pluralisation coming along with democratization pose a challenge to the churches in the region. Like other organisations in Eastern Europe, the churches have to adopt to the social structure that constitutes a democratic society and to find their place in a social space spanned anew between politics, economy and civil society.

The three most widespread Christian denominations in Eastern Europe appear to be prepared for this challenge to a different degree. As a whole, the Catholic and Protestant church look back on a long history of acting in a democratic environment. This accumulated learning has been mediated to the Eastern European branches in intensive relations. The Orthodox churches with their tradition of autocephaly and their main presence in societies that were almost exclusively undemocratic before 1989 – Greece being the most notable

exception – face their adaptational challenge without being able to draw upon such a body of experience. In other words: the different adaptational and cohesional challenges the churches experienced in the past lead to substantial differences between the organisational cultures of the three denominations today.[1] This is not without consequences for the Christian churches' ability to contribute to the democratization processes in their respective countries. In this paper, I will focus on one aspect of their potential contribution, namely the mobilization of their members for active involvement in civil society organisations. My hypothesis is that because of differences between their organisational cultures, the Catholic and Protestant church are more successful in generating civic activism among their members in Eastern Europe, than the Orthodox church is.

I will explore this using the Christian churches in Romania as an example. Romania is one of the most religious countries in Europe and the Orthodox church is the dominant denomination.[2] This makes the country a good case for an exploratory analysis of the impact of Orthodoxy on civic activism. However, potential majority/minority effects could distort the findings. Catholics and Protestants are a religious minority in Romania - cohesion among them could therefore be stronger. Firstly, this could lead to a smaller share of nominal members in the overall membership and secondly, to a higher degree of activation of their members for the matters of the congregation.[3] These potential biases will be dealt with in the quantitative analyses.

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1   Following the Organisational Culture approach by Schein, Edgar H. (1992).

2   Dungaciu, Dan (2004), p. 1. In 2005, 92,1% of ethnic Romanians declared themselves Christian Orthodox, 2,7% Roman Catholic, 1,2% Protestant and 1,6% Greek Catholic.

3   Yeung, Anne Birgitta (2004), p. 415.

In the following section, I will present the research design for this paper along with some notes on the theoretical background. A short account on the churches' history of organisational learning will follow, focusing on the differences in the organisational culture of the Catholic and Orthodox Church. I will assume that the differences between Orthodoxy and one of the two other Christian denominations are much more substantial, than the differences between Protestantism and Catholicism. The Protestant and Catholic Church shared most of the critical historical events in their political and social environment. Therefore, telling the story for Western Christianity as a whole and omitting the differences between the Western Christian denominations should still allow me to draw meaningful conclusions regarding the churches' influence on the civic activism of their members.

In the subsequent section, I will describe the sample that has been used for the quantitative analyses in this paper. The findings will be presented in section 5. They suggest that the organisational culture of the three churches decisively influences the civic activism of their members. Since the overwhelming majority of Romanians is Orthodox, Orthodoxy appears as a factor decisively shaping the prospects of civil society in Romania.

2. Theoretical Background

The research design of this paper is set in a nexus between the individual, civil society and the state. In consequence, it touches a vast array of theoretical debates, for none of which a consensus seems even close to be reached between the main scholars in the field. For lack of space, I will restrict myself to presenting the concepts that will be used for the research design itself. Firstly, I am going to explain how civil society and civic activism will be understood and measured in this study. Secondly, I will set forth the

theoretical framework for conceptualizing the influence of the churches on the civic activism of their members. Its cornerstone is the concept of *Organisational Culture*. It will help me to reconstruct which activism-related group norms are conveyed by the churches to their members. Finally, I will present the theoretical background for other variables such as educational level or occupational status that will be controlled for in the subsequent quantitative analyses.

2.1. Civil Society and Civic Activism

In this paper, civil society will be defined as *the social space between the private networks of the individual and the state, where people come together and form social groups to pursue their common interests.* In this definition, *common interests* refers to interests common to the people that associate, not necessarily common to the whole of society. That is, activities linked to achieving the group's objectives do not have to be beneficial for the society as a whole in order to be called civic activism. The author shares the view that civil society and civic activism should rather be seen as "an ambivalent concept such as state or power."[4] Only such an understanding of the concepts opens the way for unprejudiced research on civil society issues.[5] Similar "value-free" definitions are used by several scholars in the field.[6]

In line with this understanding of civil society, civic activism will be operationalized as *Involvement in Organisations.* It is a combined measure of peoples' membership in different civil society organisations with their volunteering for the respective organisations. It is coded in such a way

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4 Karolewski, Ireneusz Pawel (2006), p. 178.

5 Layton, Robert (2004), p. 22.

6 Howard, Marc Morjé (2003); Karolewski, Ireneusz Pawel (2006); Reichhardt, Sven (2004).

that being a member and volunteer in an organisation as well as being only a member or volunteer are all counted as instances for the involvement in an organisation. Hence, the variable is a dichotomous variable: a person will be either involved in an organisation or not. *Involvement in Organisations* is the dependent variable in this study.

2.2. Churches and Civic Activism

How do churches influence civic activism? Before I will explore this theoretically, I want to give a short account on how research on civic activism has treated religion so far. In a number of studies, individual religiosity - regardless of the religion in question - is taken as an independent variable to explain an individual's involvement in civil society organisations. In these cases, attendance of religious services proves to be a strong predictor of civic activism in religious organisations.[7] For the involvement in civil society organisations other than religious ones the effects of religiosity are less strong or sometimes not significant.[8] However, if denominational differences are taken into account, individual religiosity can better explain civic activism: more conservative denominations successfully mobilize their members for church volunteering, but less so for nonchurch civic engagement, whereas members of more liberal denominations tend to be more involved in both religious and secular organisations.[9]

Some studies even come to the conclusion that some denominations do not mobilize their members for civic

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7 Badescu, Gabriel and Katja Neller (2007), p. 182; Park, Jerry Z. and Christian Smith (2000), p. 272.

8 Yeung, Anne Brigitta (2004), p. 416;

9 Reitsma, Scheepers and Grotenhuis (2005), p. 6; Yeung, Anne Brigitta (2004), p. 414. For differences between conservative and liberal congregations see Schwadel, Philip (2005), p. 168.

activism at all.[10] In the case of the studies that found positive effects of religiosity in general on civic activism, negative effects of some denominations could have been consumed by strong positive effects of other denominations on civic activism. Therefore, their findings do not rule out the possibility that religiousness in the context of certain denominations has an overall demobilizing effect on believers. In line with that interpretation, several studies state that one has to differentiate between denominations to obtain meaningful explanations for the effect of religiosity on civic activism.[11] Further more, most of the studies cited here are restricted to Western Christian denominations. In neither of these, Orthodoxy or non-Christian religions have been explicitly under scrutiny. Hence, general effects of religiosity on civic activism found in these studies are actually the effects of Western Christian denominations on civic activism. Differences between denominations found to be insignificant might prove to be very well significant, when the comparison also comprises non-Western religions.

But now, how do denominational affiliation and religious behaviour influence civic activism? What role does an individual's membership in a church - dependent on the denomination in question - play for its involvement in civil society organisations? Theories on civic activism set out the theoretical scope for this. Group norms and the integration into social networks are important explanatory variables for many approaches in the field. But how do group norms come into being? I believe that in this regard, churches have an important role to play: they convey a distinctive set of norms to their members and shape their outlook on the social and political environment.

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10 Schwadel, Philip (2005), p. 167.

11 Lam, Pui-Yan (2002); Schwadel, Philip (2005); Uslaner, Eric M. (2002); Wilson, John (2000).

The link between an individual's set of norms influencing her or his civic activism on one hand and her or his denominational affiliation on the other is provided by the social identity theory. It holds that people strive for a positive social identity, derived from belonging to positively evaluated groups.[12] This is believed to be the reason, why social norms recognized by the group are followed by individual community members. Put more simply: "Christians do not interpret their religion in a vacuum; they take cues from fellow parishioners and clergy."[13] The norms and values that are upheld in their religious community therefore strengthen or weaken their commitments directly.[14] Whether these norms only value engagement for the community or also promote involvement in worldly matters depends on the community in question. Therefore, denominational affiliation can serve as an indicator for a certain view of society and civic activity a believer shares with the members of his or her congregation and denomination.[15]

It is true that congregational affiliation might be a more exact indicator for an individual's view of society and civic activity. However, as even a proponent of a congregational approach notes: "Congregations within denominations tend to be somewhat similar."[16] Therefore, if the differences between Orthodox and non-Orthodox Christians are under scrutiny, religious affiliation should be a fairly good indicator for differences between individuals' norms linked to civic activism. The more so as civic activists themselves often link their commitment to their religious faith.[17]

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12 Reitsma, Scheepers and te Grotenhuis (2005), p. 2.

13 Schwadel, Philip (2005), p. 160.

14 Wilson, John (2000), p. 218.

15 Schwadel, Philip (2005), p. 161.

16 *ibidem*.

17 Uslaner, Eric M. (2002), p. 241.

Besides this, sharing the norms of a denomination does not necessarily require own religious practice. Religious instruction usually happens during the upbringing of a person and related norms are given on by parents to their children as part of a broader set of cultural understandings.

One of those norms is altruism. The common understanding of the teachings of Jesus Christ indicates that this norm is promoted by all variants of Christian faith to at least some degree. Altruism may serve as a motivation for activism that is beneficial to people beyond the limits of the community. This can be explained with the mutually enforcing co-action of social norms with the system of reciprocity as it is envisaged by the Social Capital approach. This way, seemingly altruistic behaviour, e.g. helping others outside the individual's community, may be explained by the individual's drive for honour or approval in his social network. Here, reciprocity is not ensured by the direct beneficiaries of the individual's behaviour, but by the community the individual belongs to. In exchange for its 'altruistic behaviour' the individual is accorded a higher status in the community.[18] However, it has to be mentioned that altruism is not the only norm that makes the mechanism work. Intolerance or tolerance could have a similar function, if they are shared norms of the community. Intolerance could lead to harmful actions by an individual against others outside the community, tolerance to actions similar to seemingly altruistic behaviour. Again, reciprocity would be ensured by the members of the community the individual is part of.

Further more, the church's theology of state and culture, e.g. the value it puts on pluralism, the way it conceives its relationship with the state or its stance towards nationhood, are important for the church's impact on its members civic

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18 Portes, Alejandro (1998), p. 9.

activism. If the church teaches that the state has the role to solve social problems, church members are believed to be less likely to get involved in civil society organisations[19] - even more so, if civil society in general is rather in opposition to the state. With that configuration, being part of a church closely cooperating with the state is likely to translate into dissociation from civil society organisations. Along with that, the degree to which involvement in society is directly promoted by the Christian church in question varies.[20] Whereas some religious communities rather promote the retreat from society, others teach their members to take an active role in the larger society.[21] The organisational structure of the church can be view as an expression of both the church-state relationship and the value given to involvement.[22]

2.3. An Approach to Analyzing a Church's Stance on Civic Activism

Although norms appear to be constitutive of the role denominational affiliation plays for civic activism, it is a rather difficult endeavour to grasp the differences in the set of norms a particular Christian denomination promotes. The normative differences between the denominations are largely of emphasis.[23] But again, these different emphases may

19 Uslaner, Eric M. (2002), p. 240.

20 Lam, Pui-Yan (2002), p. 408.

21 Uslaner, Eric M. (2002), p. 239.

22 ibid., p. 240 and Curtis, Baer and Grabb (2001), p. 785.

23 In fact, even the Great Schism of 1054 between the (today) Roman-Catholic and Eastern Orthodox Church had first and foremost political reasons. It mainly evolved from the universal claim to leadership of the Roman pope (Leb, Ioan Vasile, 2001a, p. 12). The theological dispute is based on the so-called 'filioque clause', an addition to the creed. However, the phrase was already added

account for much of the variation in mobilization for civic activism among the members of different denominations.

It is unlikely that official documents would display these nuances. To study the way religious services are held or the church showcases itself might easily lead to distorted results due to the cultural bias of the researcher. The organisational structure, too, could be easily misconstrued. In addition to that religious concepts are deeply routed in the personal conceptions of the world. These differences are unlikely to surface in the believers' portrayal of their faith. So how to grasp the set of norms a particular church conveys to its members?

The problems mentioned here are common to the research on organisational culture.[24] The Organisational Culture approach tells us that the same observable behaviour or physical environment could mean contrary things in different organisations.[25] Only if one gathers more information about the organisational culture one can be sure that his or her judgements are not misleading.[26] Further more, if one asks members about the norms and values by which they guide their behaviour, one at best grasps the conscious part of the respective culture. This, in turn, is very likely to be distorted by social desirability.[27]

To allow for a structured analysis that avoids these problems, in research on organisational culture three levels of analysis are usually distinguished: artefacts, espoused values and underlying assumptions. Artefacts are the most visible organisational structures and processes, i.e. how

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in 447 at the Synod of Toledo. The Great Schism occured roughly 600 years later.

24 Schein, Edgar H. (1992), pp. 16-18.

25 ibid., p. 17.

26 Schein, Edgar H. (1988), p. 9.

27 Schein, Edgar H. (1992), p. 21.

buildings of the organisation look or how members in the organisation behave. Espoused values are the justifications of the group's behaviour given by the members of the group as they are embodied in strategy papers, internal publications or the group's orally circulated philosophies. They are meant to guide the group and to show new members to what they should adopt to. Hence, these shared beliefs remain conscious.[28] Basic assumptions, in turn, are the part of the organisational culture which are taken for granted by all members and which they themselves are not necessarily aware of any more. They are believed to provide the interpretational key for the other two levels of analysis.[29]

Basically, organisational culture is thought of as an organisation's shared learning. A group is frequently challenged by the external environment in two ways: It has to adapt to changes in society and to assure cohesion among its members. A group has to find solutions to these adaptational and cohesional challenges in order to survive. The solutions become shared basic assumptions about how to behave in given situations, if they continue to be successful to solve the group's ultimate problems with adaptation and cohesion over a longer period of time.[30] Once these solutions have become basic assumptions, they form the most stable part of an organisational culture and change only gradually, sometimes even long after they ceased to provide appropriate solutions to the external survival and internal integration issues.[31] This is believed to happen, because of another important function that shared assumptions fulfil besides meeting external challenges: They provide meaning, stability and comfort for the group members. Shared assumptions reduce the anxiety that would

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28 ibid., p. 20.

29 Schein, Edgar H. (1988), p. 9.

30 Schein, Edgar H. (1992), p. 19.

31 ibid., p. 4.

occur due to the ever changing external environment in that they give ready answers for the understanding and prediction of events around one.[32] Therefore, events that challenge basic assumptions will release defensiveness. A group will rather distort or deny what does not fit with its basic assumptions than readily change its general pattern of perception of the events around it.[33]

The approach suggests that one can grasp an organisation's basic assumptions, if one identifies the major challenges in the history of the respective group.[34] At the same time, the theory holds that basic assumptions might be persistent for a period of time even if the external environment of a group has radically changed and the assumptions do not lead to positive results any more.

However, the question remains, whether this approach may be applied to religious bodies as well. Organisational culture research describes the strength and degree of integration of a culture as "a function of the stability of the group, the length of time the group has existed, the intensity of the group's experiences of learning [...] and the strength and clarity of the assumptions held by the founders and leaders of the group."[35] The main Christian denominations have existed for several hundred years. More over, the history of the denominations is full of critical incidents: All denominations went through changing political environments, schisms and times of persecution. The strength and clarity of the assumptions of the founders and leaders are also given. In addition to that denominations are very stable groups, since most of their members are part of them from birth to death. Therefore, I believe that the

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32 Schein, Edgar H. (1988), p. 8.

33 Schein, Edgar H. (1992), p. 22.

34 Schein, Edgar H. (1988), p. 18.

35 ibid., p. 7.

different denominations should all have a detectable and pronounced organisational culture. Their core are the basic assumptions - or in other words: norms - conveyed to and shared by their members.

2.4. Other Factors influencing Civic Activism

From the preceding subchapters it follows that group norms conveyed by the churches play a role in motivating church members for civic activism. However, not everybody that is motivated or has reason to engage in civil society organisations actually does so. The *Resource Approach* holds that lack of time, money and civic skills can be decisive obstacles to civic activism. In turn, if an individual possesses these resources, the probability that she or he gets involved in civil society organisations increases.[36]

Civic skills are understood as the individual's capability to speak and write well, organize meetings and actively take part in them. People with a higher educational level and higher income have certain opportunities to develop these skills that people with a lower socio-economic status do not have. Their jobs provide them with a training ground for civic skills, because higher paid jobs usually include more self-management and organisational tasks than lower paid ones. The same applies to education: Forms of higher education involve more self-determination in setting up one's working schedule and more opportunities to train organisational skills, e.g. through the participation in student organisations.[37] However, there are opportunities to learn these civic skills that are not linked to income or educational level: Active participation in a parish or in civil society organisations represent two options to develop civic skills available to a much broader range of social strata.[38]

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36 Pattie, Seyd and Whiteley (2003), p. 445.

37 Wilson, John (2000), p. 273.

38 ibidem.

The latter learning opportunity means that people that are already engaged in an organisation to a certain extent are likely to do so even more over time. In the quantitative analyses of this study, I will include the triad of indicators for an individual's resources, namely education, income and occupational status, to control for their effect on the civic activism of the church members.

Besides this, I will control for the effects of the demographical factors gender and age. In previous studies, both young and old people have proven to be less involved in civil society organisations than the middle-aged.[39] As far as gender is regarded, in cross-national studies, no consistent effect on civic engagement has been found. In North America, women appear to be slightly more likely to volunteer than men. In Western Europe, there is no overall gender difference. In some countries males are more likely to get involved in civil society organisations, in others females. Differences sometimes occur in the type of civic activism, too.[40]

Last but not least I will control for generalised trust. It is used as an indicator for a society's social capital by the *Social Capital Theory*.[41] On the societal level, social capital is believed to have various beneficial outcomes: higher rates of political participation, better governance and accelerated economic growth to name only a few. Initially, civic activism was regarded as a source of social capital. The theory claimed that through their participation in civil society organisations, people develop norms of reciprocity and trust. However, several studies convincingly argue that the reversal is true: people that trust more join civil society organisations.[42] Therefore, social capital would be a source of civic activism

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39 Badescu, Gabriel and Katja Neller (2007), p. 159.

40 Wilson, John (2000), p. 227.

41 Putnam, Robert D. (1995), p. 67.

42 Glaeser, Edward L. (2001), p. 35; see Badescu and Neller 2007 for an empirical test.

in a society that could distort my findings regarding the effect of the churches' organisational culture on civic activism.

3. The Churches' Organisational Culture

As I have argued in the second section of this paper, I believe that the inclination of a person to engage in civic activism is affected by its denominational affiliation.[43] This is because I assume that churches convey a distinctive set of norms to their members. According to Organisational Culture research, this set of norms may be equated with the organisational culture of the churches. However, as it has been pointed out, the set of norms a church explicitly and implicitly promotes cannot be measured directly. Hence, for the quantitative analyses in the following section, the organisational culture of the three churches under scrutiny will be measured as a person's denominational affiliation, assuming that for every member of the same church, the organisational culture she or he shares is a constant.[44]

In the following subchapters, the task is therefore not to discuss the measurement of the variable, but to explain, how the organisational cultures of the Orthodox Church differs from that of the Catholic and Protestant Church and what the expected consequences of these differences are for the motivation of the churches' members to engage in civic activism. Put differently, I will explain how the variable *Organisational Culture of the Churches* will influence the dependent variable *Civic Activism* when controlling for the factors presented in chapter 2.4.

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43 The inclination for civic acitivsm has to be distinguished from the realized potential because of the impact of an individual's resources on its civic activism (see chapter 2.4. for more details).

44 This has been discussed in the second chapter: The denomination is the entity, in which religious beliefs are shaped and therewith related views on society and civic activity.

As it has been argued in chapter 2.3., different organisational cultures are the product of a different organisational learning that occurred over time. This organisational learning is triggered by the political and societal environment which poses cohesional and adaptational challenges to the organisations. In the case of the Christian churches, the history of environmental challenges is long and complex. The nature of the task implicates that not only the Churches' history in East and West has to be taken into account, but also the history of principalities, nations, societal movements and ideas. Therefore, the account provided in the following subchapters makes no claim to be exhaustive. I will only be able to compare historical epochs and point out the major differences in the environmental challenges the churches had to face. However, the concise historical account should suffice for the reconstruction of the basic assumptions that are shared by the churches' members, since only the critical incidents in an organisation's history are believed to trigger organisational learning which in turn leads to the formation of basic assumptions.[45]

I do not attempt to argue that the organisational culture and therewith a denomination's relation to society and state is based on insurmountable differences in theologies and that a given organisational culture would therefore be the only theologically possible outcome for the denomination in question. I am well aware of the argument that in the theology of any of the three denominations one could find the basis for an ecclesiology that embraces pluralism, civic activity and church-state separation - as well as intolerance, escapism and theocracy.[46] My argument goes the other way round: I

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45 Schein, Edgar H. (1988), p. 18.

46 For an attempt to reconcile Orthodoxy and democracy on theological grounds see Papanikolaou, Aristotle (2003); for an account on how Catholicism came to embrace democratic values see Sigmund, Paul E. (1987).

will cite theological arguments to show, how the churches have reacted on the challenges faced by them throughout history. This train of thought is not alien to theological disquisitions on the topic.[47] What I want to elaborate is the *de facto* self-conception of the churches and their view on the relationship between Christianity and society that they – along with other values, as it will be shown – convey to their members.

The first task in the subsequent subchapter will be to establish a suitable starting point for the analysis of the critical incidents that have led to the development of different sets of group norms between the churches. In the words of organisational culture research: When does the organisational culture of the one catholic church start to differentiate in at first an Orthodox and Roman Catholic and later a Protestant variant? Afterwards, I will demonstrate how these different points of origin coined different historical trajectories for the organisational culture of the churches, with a special focus on the churches in Romania.

3.1. Three Denominations, Two Histories

The most obvious starting point for a separate history of adaptational and cohesional challenges for the Catholic and Orthodox Church would arguably be the Great Schism in 1054. At this point, the one Catholic church – here still literally the "universal church" – finally broke in two: the Eastern Orthodox with its religious centre in Constantinople and the Roman Catholic with the Pope as its leading figure in the West. However, the Great Schism itself is seen as the outcome of a longer process of alienation of the two religious communities in West and East.[48] In 1054, inside the Christian church two subcultures had already been in the process of formation for a long time.

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47 Papanikolaou, Aristotle (2003), p. 77.

48 Leb, Ioan Vasile (2001a), p. 7.

Therefore, the starting point for the analysis of the critical incidents for the development of the organisational culture of denominations today has to be set before that time. If one understands the ecclesiology of a denomination mainly as a function of its political and cultural environment – as organisational culture research would do and I do in this paper, it seems adequate to chose a point in time, where this environment significantly changed for the first time for the initially two and later three churches.

This was the case in 395, when with the death of Theodosius I the Roman Empire permanently split in two. He was the last Roman Emperor that succeeded to reunite the western and eastern portions of the empire. By the end of his reign, he had changed the statute of religion in his empire. In 380, in an edict addressed to the population of Constantinople and entitled "Cunctos populos", Theodosius officially ended the religious liberty in the Roman Empire and declared the Nicene Christianity with its distinct understanding of the Holy Trinity the de facto state religion. Roughly one hundert years later, in 475, when Julius Nepos, the last legitimate Western Roman Emperor, had been deposed, in the Western part of Europe the church stood on its own, facing a struggle for power with the secular rulers of the time, whereas in the Eastern part of the former Roman Empire, Christianity was the state religion in an intact, now Byzantine Empire.[49]

In the East, this pattern of power remained basically unchanged for a thousand years, until the year 1453, when Constantinople was conquered by the Ottomans and the Byzantine Empire finally fell. After this, the Ottoman Empire became the central power in the territory of the Orthodox Church - an empire, of which the combination of secular and religious power was a distinct feature, too. In Russia, in this regard, the situation did not differ much: here, the

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49 Panther, Stephan (1998), p. 14.

Byzantine state ideology of Ceasaropapism and therewith the combination of secular and religious power became the official doctrine for the church.[50] In South-Eastern Europe, the Orthodox churches accepted the Balkan tribe logic to resist Islamization.[51] This lead to "ethnocentric messianism", which was a quasi-continuation of the *symphonia* ideology under the given political circumstances.[52] In closing, for Orthodox Christianity, the Byzantine empire is believed to not only be a passing moment in history but a formative period for its thoughts and practices.[53] Byzantine Christian theocracy still functions as the primary frame of reference for contemporary Orthodox discussions on democracy.[54]

In the West instead, from the 5th until the 8th century, the central secular power having vanished, the church itself had to represent the authority of the Roman Empire, substituting it as the bearer of the Latin culture.[55] Only in the time of absolute monarchy, the Roman Catholic church lost its autonomy to the secular rulers.[56] Later, its political and social environment promoted liberalism and democracy and the church had to adopt its theology of state and culture to a pluralist ideology, like the Protestant Church.

The fact that in the West the churches developed the concept of separate and self-contained bodies and the Orthodox Church did not is a fundamentally different starting point for their organisational learning later on. Further more, their ministry being centred on different regions, they experienced different adaptational and cohe-

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50 Panther, Stephan (1998), p. 24.

51 Mungiu-Pippidi, Alina (1998), p. 3.

52 ibid., p. 2.

53 Papanikolaou, Aristotle (2003), p. 77.

54 ibid., p. 84.

55 Ica, Ioan I. Jr. (2002), p. 27.

56 ibid., p. 29.

sional challenges. These are the two main reasons why from the viewpoint of Organisational Culture analysis, I believe that there are only two histories to be told for the three denominations under scrutiny: One for Christianity in the West and one for the Orthodox Church in the East.

3.2. Consequences for the Organisational Culture of the Churches

From its very beginning and until modern times, the Orthodox Church has been under the powerful rule of one central government. Thus, it developed the concept of *symphonia*. It called for the emperor and the bishop to closely cooperate. The amalgam of secular and religious powers envisaged by *Symphonia* had various implications. Most importantly, it resulted in a separation of spheres of activity between the church and the secular power. The Byzantine emperor Justinian I expressed this in making the distinction between the *imperium* and the *sacerdotium*. "The former refers to the emperor and is responsible for 'human affairs', whereas the later refers to the priesthood, symbolized in the person of the bishop, and 'serves divine things'".[57] However, in this partnership, without doubt, the emperor always was the senior partner, being ultimately responsible for the "harmony between the *sacerdotium* and the *imperium*".[58] In exchange for its protection by the secular ruler, the church supported the imperial policies, thus leading to a "sacralization" of politics. Consequentially, the empire was seen as the divinely willed society of the one true god[59] and the Orthodox Church dedicated itself to prayer and spiritual ends, refraining from worldly affairs.[60]

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57 Papanikalaou, Aristotle (2003), p. 82.

58 ibid., p. 83.

59 ibid., p. 82.

60 Mungiu-Pippidi, Alina (1998), p. 3.

At the same time, the Roman Catholic Church in the West entered a struggle for power with the "Barbarians" on its own, without the protection of a particular secular ruler, and was confronted with the task to Romanize the Germanic tribes.[61] Therefore, from the start, the church developed a missionary and pedagogic approach to the society surrounding it and a monasticism that was community oriented, preserving and spreading Latin culture.[62] Further more, the pretension of cultural superiority by the church and its demands for worldly powers brought it into conflict with the "Barbarians" and the later Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation.[63]

In the case of the Orthodox Church, *symphonia* had several consequences for its organisational structure. Since it never developed a self-conception as a separate body from the state, it neither developed an internal professional bureaucracy on its own.[64] In consequence, the organisational ties between the different local Orthodox churches weakened over time. For many local churches, autocephaly became the organisational form of choice, thereby promoting an organic view of church, people and state.[65] However, gaining independence from the Oecumenic Patriarchate very often led to an increasing dependency on the support of secular powers in the respective countries. In Romania, after gaining autocephaly in 1885, the regime set up a cost unit in the ministry of education and cults, which administered the church's assets and thereby made the church economically totally dependent on the state.[66]

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61 Ica, Ioan I. Jr. (2002), p. 27.

62 ibidem.

63 ibid., p. 28.

64 Mungiu-Pippidi, Alina (1998), p. 3.

65 Henkel, Jürgen (2007), p. 113.

66 Leb, Ioan Vasile (1998b), p. 87.

With the emergence of the modern national states, the local Orthodox churches became essentially national churches.[67] In the words of Teoctist, the patriarch of the Romanian Orthodox Church between 1986 and 2007: "As a national church, every Orthodox church has as a natural relationship to any state, because the life of the church unfolds within the respective state."[68] Thus, in Orthodox countries, religion never was an alternative source of group identity to the idea of the nation state, both being interwoven from the start.[69] This is also true in the Romanian case, even though the nationalist discourse was started by the Transylvanian Greek Catholic Church. Quickly, however, the Romanian Orthodox church borrowed and eventually monopolized this discourse, positioning itself as the paradigm for the very definition of "Romanianism".[70] Reading the Romanian Orthodox Church's justification for its desire to be granted the status of a patriarchate in 1925 makes clear, how interwoven the self-conception of the church with that of the state is. As one of the reasons for its endeavour it states: "The maturity and strength of the unified Romanian national state demand the constitution of a patriarchate."[71] In the first Romanian constitution of 1923, the church was granted the status of a national church.

Under communism, the autocephal structure of the Orthodox Church further meant that institutional and moral support from abroad remained weak.[72] Thus, the Romanian Orthodox Church was neither organisationally, nor culturally in a position to resist the regime's drive to

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67 Miller, Robert F. (2005), p. 3.

68 Henkel, Jürgen (2001), p. 172.

69 Dungaciu, Dan (2004), p. 11.

70 Stan, Lavinia and Lucian Turcescu (2000), p. 1468.

71 Leb, Ioan Vasile (1998b), p. 93.

72 Leb, Ioan Vasile (2001b), p. 160.

use the church for its ends. It became "a good paradigm of the manipulation of the Church under Communism".[73] It sanctioned the imprisonment of its politically active priests by issuing communiqués denying any form of religious persecution[74], entered the front of Socialist Unity and Democracy, rendered homage to Ceausescu on various occasions and even defrocked priests on indication by the party's leadership.[75] In its drive to find a *modus vivendi* with the regime, it even tried to reconcile Orthodox theology with the nationalist-communist ideology.[76]

On the other hand, the Roman Catholic Church, early in its history, developed a strong inner structure and leadership, resembling itself a monarchy.[77] Having always been without the protection of a particular secular ruler, it kept this strong hierarchical structure throughout history and until today. With the emergence of nation states, the church had a strong international body that allowed the local churches to keep a more independent position in the relationship with local rulers. This is why in the West, nationhood and religion often were antagonistic guardians of group identity - or at least complimentary,[78] and local churches proved largely immune to nationalist ideologies. Besides this, under communism, the international linkage helped the local Catholic and Protestant churches in the East to maintain a firm stance against the secular regimes. They were behind a "shield of 'nationalist (ethnic) persecution" – as a Romanian Orthodox theologian expresses it[79], arguably an outcome of

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73 Miller, Robert F. (2005), p. 4.

74 Lavinia, Stan and Lucian Turcescu (2000), p. 1468.

75 Lavinia, Stan and Lucian Turcescu (2000), p. 1469.

76 ibidem.

77 Ica, Ioan I. Jr. (2002), p. 27.

78 Dungaciu, Dan (2004), p. 11.

79 Leb, Ioan Vasile (1998c), p. 130.

strong international pressure. Besides this, the local Roman Catholic churches could count on the moral leadership of Pope John Paul II with his strong anti-communist policy.[80]

In the case of the Orthodox Church, along with the continuity from Caesaropapism to religious nationalism, there is a continuity in its anti-pluralist stance. The equation of religious affiliation and national belonging means that who is not Orthodox does not fully belong to the national community. The cornerstone for the development of this logic was laid in the Byzantine Empire.[81] Here, the principle of cultural unity within the empire was Orthodox Christianity. Other cultures did not enjoy the same privileges and were at times even persecuted. Therefore, the Byzantine theocracy was one that did not value multiculturalism.[82] In communist times, the regime - being eager to strengthen national unity - could easily deploy the local Orthodox churches against ethnic and religious minorities.[83] Most well known in this regard are the actions against the Uniate churches in the Ukraine and Romania, sanctioned by the churches' willing collaboration.[84] Today, there is a growing fear to lose members to "unscrupulously proselytizing" American neoprotestant churches and the re-strengthening of the Greek Catholic churches in the region.[85] The latter is still conceived as a direct challenge to the Orthodox Church's self-conception as *the* national church.

Besides nationalism, another distinct feature of Orthodox belief that can be traced back to the Caesaropapist ideology

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80 Miller, Robert F. (2005), p. 2.

81 Papanikalaou, Aristotle (2003), p. 83.

82 ibidem.

83 Martin, David (1993[1978]), p. 48.

84 ibidem.

85 Henkel, Jürgen (2007), p. 117.

is escapism.[86] The separation of spheres of activity between the secular and religious powers established with the concept of *symphonia* made the Orthodox Church refrain from independent involvement in society. Instead, hermits became the norm of spirituality.[87] Theologically, this spiritual maxim is called *hesychasm*. Retreating to solitary places, monks try to come closer to the Holy Spirit through meditative techniques until they see "the light of God".[88] How accentuated monasticism is in Orthodox theology, Teoctist expresses with the following: "Monasticism represents the deepest dimension of Orthodox spirituality and Orthodox life, the highest values, the closest relationship to God, the way of divinisation of man, the way of sacralization of man."[89] The Orthodox Church understands Christianhood almost exclusively as the preparation for the afterlife, without active social implication as an integral part of it.[90] This decisively influences the way in which challenges posed by the environment are interpreted by the church. For Orthodox theology, *patience* is the only possible, holy answer of the church to the divine ordeal of a tyrannic reign. "This patience is part of the creed, a working of the Holy Spirit and should not be mistaken as weakness or cowardliness."[91]

This surely is not an interpretation of the creed which promotes civic activism. Thus, the very notion of active citizenry as promoted by civil society organisations represents an adaptational challenge for Orthodox churches. Being accustomed to represent the nation as a whole alongside

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86 Ica, Ioan I. Jr. (2002), p. 38.

87 Mungiu-Pippidi, Alina (1998), p. 3; Ica, Ioan I. Jr (2002), p. 25.

88 http://www.crestinism-ortodox.ro/html/06/6f_isihasmul.html (05.06.07).

89 Henkel, Jürgen (2005), p. 189.

90 Ica, Ioan I. Jr. (2002), p. 38.

91 Leb, Ioan Vasile (2001b), p. 159.

a central government and promoting contemplation and patience as the core characteristics of Christianhood, making the detour, i.e. engaging their core supporters to raise their voices in a fragmented political and social space, instead of influencing the state authorities directly, is alien to local Orthodox churches. Given the strong presence of Western civil society organisations in the Orthodox countries after 1989, this resulted in a tendency to reject the modernization project of the West, warning the population to not lose its "Orthodox identity" and not to take over "Western" values "uncritically".[92] A paradigm for this is the Romanian Orthodox Church's argumentation against legal abortion or tolerance for sexual minorities.[93]

The political and social environment of the Catholic and Protestant Church took a different trajectory and the organisational learning triggered by this environment led to different assumptions concerning civil society. In the West, Renaissance, Reformation and Enlightenment led to democratization and pluralization on a national basis much earlier and much more profound than in the East.[94] Performing in a nationally and religiously fragmented and increasingly democratic social space rendered it necessary for the churches to accept religious pluralism, the notion of free conscience and political activity by its members.

This is not to say that the Catholic Church happily embraced the ideas of Enlightenment and democracy. Only gradually, the official doctrine changed from an overall neutral position towards forms of government – tending

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92 Take as an example the articles and interviews by Ion Alexandru Mizgan, until April 2007 cultural counselor to the Romanian Orthodox Episcopacy of Oradea, Bihor and Salaj, in Mizgan, Ion Alexandru (2004).

93 Mungiu-Pippidi, Alina (1998), p. 3.

94 Panther, Stephan (1998), p. 11.

to favour monarchy due to institutional interests of the Catholic Church in the time of Absolutism – to a teaching that endorsed democracy as the morally superior form of government. In the 19th century the church still was in a rather defensive position against a rising tide of liberalism, nationalism and revolution.[95] This led to the famous Papal encyclicals against these ideas.

In 1891, Leo XVIII made a first step in officially distinguishing between society and civil and ecclesial sovereignty in his encyclical letter *Rerum Novarum*.[96] Another leap forward was made by John XXIII. In his encyclical letter *Pacem in Terris*, he states that "every human being has the right to honour God according to the dictates of an upright conscience" and that "the dignity of the human person involves the right to take an active part in public affairs and to contribute one's part to the common good of the citizens".[97] At the end of the development towards endorsing democracy and pluralism stand the statements by John Paul II. In his encyclical letter *Centesimus Annus* after the democratic revolutions in Eastern Europe, he states that the primary responsibility for political issues "[...] belongs not to the State but to individuals and to the various groups and associations which make up society."[98] The place of the church in such a civil society is that of one, however important, association among others. It cannot claim a privileged status in society, but only a "citizenship status".[99] The relationship between Catholic Church and civil society was finally one of good will and cooperation.

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95 Sigmund, Paul E. (1987), p. 535.

96 Ica, Ioan I. Jr (2002), p. 31.

97 John XXIII (1963), paragraphs 14 and 16. Cited in Sigmund, Paul E. (1987), p. 545.

98 John Paul II (1991), paragraph 48.

99 ibid., paragraph 5. Cited in Lenschen, Dirk (2003), p. 387.

Out of the historical account in the previous subchapters, for the set of norms related to civic activism that is conveyed by the different churches to their members, a clear picture emerges. It is depicted in the table below.

Features of Organisational Culture	Orthodoxy	Western Christianity
Involvement in Society	-	+
Political Pluralism	-	+
Religious Pluralism	-	o
International Orientation	-	+

Features of the Churches' Organisational Culture related to Civic Activism

Pluses and minuses indicate a general tendency. Pluses indicate an organisational culture that promotes the respective value and is therefore beneficial to the civic activism of the church's members; minuses in turn mean that the organisational culture in this point discourages civic activism due to the rejection of the respective values indicated on the left. Because the civil society in post-socialist countries is in the majority internationally oriented, nationalism is discouraging civic activism in Eastern Europe.[100]

The simplified assessment above suggests that the overall organisational culture of the Orthodox Church rather discourages civic activism. Therefore, I expect Orthodox Christians to be less active than Catholics and Protestants, both for their own communities and for people outside their community.

However, organisational learning does not stop. Since 1989, some Orthodox Churches, like the Romanian one, have gained experience with a pluralist environment. On

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100   Badescu, Gabriel and Katja Neller (2007), p. 166.

the topic of the promotion of civic activism, Teoctist speaks of his church as "standing at the beginning"[101] and "having to complete the pastoral work with a social component"[102]. Concerning the church's nationalist outlook, profound changes are still to be awaited, too. But first steps towards a positive international outlook are made.[103] The lack of religious tolerance, in turn, is underpinned by the church's self-declaration as *the* national church in 1994[104] and its reluctance to give back the properties of the Greek Catholic Church.[105] Changes in the Basic Assumptions, Organisational Culture Research tells us, take time.

4. The Sample

The database I will use for the quantitative analyses in this study consists of a sample of 3771 cases. Of these, 1776 cases were selected by the Romanian Gallup Organisation for a public opinion poll, conducted on behalf of the Romanian Open Society Foundation in October 2005 and representative for the Romanian population. The same poll is used by the World Value Survey for its third wave of worldwide data collection. The remaining 1995 cases constitute the sample of the Eurobarometrul Rural, another poll ordered by the Open Society Foundation in Romania. It was conducted in November and December 2003 and is representative for the rural population in Romania. Because of this, in the merged sample, the rural area is overrepresented and I had

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101 Henkel, Jürgen (2005), p. 191.

102 Henkel, Jürgen (2001), p. 174.

103 In 2000, the leadership of the Romanian Orthodox Church, together with all other denominations in the country, signed a common statement supporting the accession of Romania to the European Union (Henkel, Jürgen, 2002, p. 163).

104 Mungiu-Pippidi, Alina (1998), p. 2.

105 Mungiu-Pippidi, Alina (1998), p. 6.

to reweight the cases according to the distribution of the locality size variable in the former public opinion poll to assure the representativity of the database for the whole Romanian population.

For this paper, I will restrict the analysis to ethnic Romanians, leaving out all minorities and minority biases. These biases are huge and would distort the analysis decisively.[106] Further more, I will exclude Uniates from the analysis, because of two reasons: Firstly, regarding their organisational culture one cannot be sure were to place them: On the Orthodox side, because they follow the Byzantine rite or among the Catholics and Protestants, because of their organisational affiliation to the Catholic church. Secondly, the Greek Catholic Church of Romania is a unique case and the effect on the civic activism of its members less interesting. Given the fact that they Greek Catholics could distort the findings, when included on either of the sides, the risk seems not worth taking.

From the measurement of *Organisational Involvement*, membership in or volunteering for unions will be excluded. This is because it is doubted, if involvement in these organisations really reflects voluntary engagement by the population.[107] Under communism membership was obligatory. Union membership in post-socialist countries therefore distorts the evaluation of the current state of civil society in Eastern Europe.[108] In Romania, too, it does not fit to the overall picture of civil society development: Romania

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106 Hungarians are almost two times more likely to be involved in civil society organisations than ethnic Romanians, whereas Roma are nearly three times less likely to do so. Odds ratios for the two ethnicities in comparison to ethnic Romanians are 1,841 and 0,380, respectively. Findings significant at $p < .05$.

107 Curtis, Baer and Grabb (2001), p. 789.

108 Curtis, Baer and Grabb (2001), p. 791.

has the highest percentage of trade union members of all new EU member countries, whereas the level of overall civic activism is well below the East European average.[109]

For the quantitative analyses, Catholic and Protestant ethnic Romanians will be grouped as *non-Orthodox Christians* and contrasted with *Orthodox Christians*. However, even though I doubled the size of the sample and grouped the members of the two Western Christian denominations, for some subgroups the numbers of cases are still very small. This is mainly because the share of Catholics and Protestants in the ethnic Romanian population is only of 2,7% and 1,2%, respectively.

5. Findings of the Quantitative Analyses

In this section, I will present the findings of the quantitative analyses. I will start with an investigation of one of the two possible minority/majority effects on the findings, namely whether in the case of Catholic and Protestant Churches, due to their minority position, their membership displays a higher degree of religious activity. If this would be the case, an overall higher rate of organisational involvement could rather reflect the effect of religiosity in general, than an organisational culture conducive to civic activism.

Afterwards, I will provide an account of the results of logistic regression analyses with *Organisational Culture of the Churches* as the independent and *Organisational Involvement* as the dependent variable. After presenting the results for involvement in organisations in general, I will also discuss the findings for the different categories of organisations. Besides this, the results will provide me with a means to evaluate whether the minority position of the Non-Orthodox Christians in Romania leads to a higher rate of overall civic activism that solely reflects the higher rate of

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109 Civil Society Development Foundation (2005), p. 23.

involvement in religious organisations. In all these analyses, *Age*, *Gender*, *Income*, *Employment Status*, *Educational Level* and *Trust* will be controlled for.

5.1. Nominal Members in Orthodox and Non-Orthodox Communities

To evaluate whether the first of the two possible minority/majority effects of the religious composition in Romania distorts the findings in the following chapters, I will evaluate the crosstabulation of the variables *Denominational Affiliation* and *Church Going*. Implicitly, this will provide me with a measure for the share of nominal members for the two religious communities in question. A nominal members will be defined here as a person that never attends religious services and therefore does not have any active relationship with his or her church. Table 1 on the next page shows the results of the crosstabulation.

Table 1

Crosstabulation
Variables: Denominational Affiliation and Church Going.

		Orthodox	Non-Orthodox	Total
Church Going	Doesn't attend	3,5%	3,0%	3,5%
	Attends[a]	96,5%	97,0%	96,5%
	Total	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%

[a]At least once a year.

Apparently, regarding the share of nominal members, there is not much difference between the Catholic and Protestant Church on one hand and the Orthodox Church on the other. The first of the two possible minority/majority effects of the religious composition in Romania can therefore be excluded.

5.2. Churches' Organisational Culture and Civic Activism

Table 2 shows the results for the logistic regression analysis with *Organisational Involvement* as the dependent variable. All independent variables but *Trust* appear to be

statistically significant predictors for *Civic Activism* with p < 0.05. Odds ratios lower than one indicate a negative effect of the independent variable on *Civic Activism,* whereas values higher than one indicate a positive effect.

Table 2

Logistic Regression Analysis.
Dependent Variable: Organisational Involvement.[*]

Independent Variables	Odds Ratio	Sig.
Denominational Affiliation (Non-orthodox Christians[b])	**2,234**	0,000
Age	**1,188**	0,022
Gender (Female)	**0,741**	0,004
Income	**0,778**	0,000
Employment Status (Employed)	**1,410**	0,004
Educational Level	**1,624**	0,000
Trust (Trusting)	0,936	0,577
Constant	0,105	0,000

[a] Unions are excluded. For the categorical variables below, labels for the higher values are given in parantheses.
[b] Excluding Uniates.

For *Age,* an odd ratio of 1,188 means that in general, middle agers are more likely to be involved in civil society organisations than youngsters and people that are aged 51 or higher have the highest chance to be active in civil society organisations. Coding the *Age* variable in line with previous findings, i.e. coding middle agers as "1" and the younger and older age group as "0", renders the effect of *Age* insignificant. In Romania, there seems to be a rather linear relationship between *Age* and *Organisational Involvement.*

For *Gender* the negative odds ratio indicates that women are less involved than men, possibly pointing to the importance of traditional role models in the Romanian society. Surprisingly, *Income*, too, proves to have an overall negative effect on *Civic Activism.* It might be that in post-socialist societies, the poor are more reliant on the networks civil society organisations are offering and are therefore more inclined to activate in them. In turn, the effect of *Employment* on civic activism is in line with the Resource theory, as is the effect of the variable *Educational Level.*

The variable *Denominational Affiliation* displays the highest odds ratio among the independent variables. The

value for the odds ratio means that the odds to be involved in a civil society organisation are 2,234 times as large for a Catholic or Protestant as for an Orthodox Christian. Since *Age*, *Gender*, *Income*, *Employment Status*, *Educational Level* and *Trust* are controlled for, it is very likely that this is a genuine effect of the *Organisational Culture of the Churches* as hypothesized in chapter 3.

In general, the odds ratios in a logistic regression refer to a unit change in the independent variable, i.e. with every unit change, the odds increase or decrease by the indicated value. This means that one cannot compare the effect sizes of all the independent variables in the logistic regression analysis above directly, since some of them are dichotomous variables, whereas others have more categories, like *Income* or *Educational Level* that are broken into four and three categories, respectively. Therefore, only the effects of the dichotomous variables *Gender* and *Employment Status* are directly comparable with that of *Denominational Affiliation.* Here, the ratios indicate that *Denominational Affiliation* is more important for *Organisational Involvement* than both *Gender* and *Employment Status.* Regarding the other independent variables, comparing the odds ratios in Table 2, we can only say that having a high-school diploma in comparison with not having finished high-school, as well as an decrease in one quartile of the income level, is less important for civic activism than the person's denominational affiliation.

However, since the change in odds for a unit change in the case of *Income* is only of 28,53%, even the difference between belonging to the lowest income quartile in contrast to being among the richest in Romania has a smaller impact on civic activism than the difference in the basic assumptions conveyed by a church to its members has. For *Educational Level*, a unit change corresponds to an increase of 62,4% for the odds of being involved, meaning that the difference

between the lowest and highest category, i.e. having some university education and not having finished high-school, makes in sum only a slightly higher difference for the odds of organisational involvement than *Denominational Affiliation*. This in turn means that the *Organisational Culture of the Churches* together with *Educational Level* have the highest effect on organisational involvement in Romania, followed by *Income.*

Table 3 breaks the level of analysis down to the different categories of organisations. In the odds ratio column the values for *Denominational Affiliation* are given. As we can see, the overall effect of *Denominational Affiliation* on civic activism seems to be mainly based on its effect on the involvement in two of the subcategories of organisations, namely religious and charitable organisations. For the other categories, its effects are not statistically significant. However, whenever the statistical significance comes to levels considerably lower than one, we have a positive effect of *Denominational Affiliation* on the involvement in the respective category of civil society organisations, too.

Table 3

Logistic Regression Analysis.
Independent Variable: Denominational Affiliation.[ab]

Dependent Variables: Involvement in…	Odds Ratio[c]	Sig.
Religious Organisations	**2,913**	0,000
Sport and Leisure Organisations	1,691	0,318
Educational Organisations	1,539	0,409
Political Organisations	0,433	0,251
Ecological Organisations	0,000	0,996
Professional Organisations	0,993	0,991
Charitable Organisations	**3,144**	0,011
Consumer Organisations	0,000	0,996
Other Organisations	0,000	0,996

[a] Age, Gender, Income, Employment Status, Educational Level and Trust have been controlled for in every analysis.
[b] Orthodox (0), Non-orthodox Christians (1). Uniates are excluded.

The odds ratios for the other independent variables are not given here. Mostly, they are insignificant. In the case of sports organisations, only *Gender*, *Educational Level* and *Trust* are significant. For the involvement in educational

organisations, the significant predictors are *Educational Level* and *Employment Status*. In the case of political organisations, these are *Gender, Employment Status* and *Educational Level.* Involvement in ecological organisations is significantly predicted only by *Income*, here again having a negative effect. In turn, the results for involvement in professional organisations prove *Age, Gender, Employment Status,* and *Educational Level* to be significant. For consumer organisations there is only one statistically significant predictor, namely *Employment Status.*

This short account shows that every category of organisations has some distinct significant predictors. There is not a single predictor which is significant for all subcategories. This is probably because of the number of cases which is too small to yield significant results for a predictor when it is not among the most important. A crosstabulation of the variable *Denominational Affiliation* with the nine dependent variables for the different categories of *Organisational Involvement* shows that only in the case of religious and charitable organisations, there are more than five cases for every cell. Therefore, the findings do not prove my hypotheses wrong. On the contrary, they give some support for it, since *Denominational Affiliation* is not only a significant predictor for civic activism bound to the religious community, i.e. involvement in religious organisations, but also for charitable organisations – the category of organisations that most likely benefits people beyond the borders of the religious community.

Let us now have a look at the results for the logistic regression analysis with the two categories of organisations as the dependent variable, for which *Denominational Affiliation* proved to be significant. Table 4 shows the results for involvement in religious organisations.

Table 4

Logistic Regression Analysis.
Dependent Variable: Involvement in Religious Organisations.[a]

Independent Variables	Odds Ratio	Sig.
Denominational Affiliation (Non-orthodox Christians[b])	**2,913**	0,000
Age	1,170	0,083
Gender (Female)	0,855	0,204
Income	**0,703**	0,000
Employment Status (Employed)	**1,337**	0,043
Educational Level	1,013	0,904
Trust (Trusting)	0,809	0,113
Constant	0,193	0,000

[a] For the categorical variables below, labels for higher values are given in parantheses.
[b] Excluding Uniates.

Here, too, *Denominational Affiliation* is the predictor with the strongest effect among the three significant ones. The odds for a Non-orthodox Christian to be involved in religious organisations are nearly three times higher than for an Orthodox Christian. *Age* increases the odds for every unit change with 17,0%, i.e. compared with the youngest the odds for the oldest age group to be involved in religious organisations are only 34,0% greater. For *Income,* the difference between the odds for the lowest income and the highest income quartile are considerably higher than in the case of *Age,* namely three times 42,3%, but still less than in the case of *Denominational Affiliation*.

Table 5 shows the results for the logistic regression analysis with the second category of organisations as the dependent variable, for which *Denominational Affiliation* proved to be a significant predictor. In the case of charitable organisations, *Educational Level* in sum has the strongest effect on involvement, since it is broken into three categories. The variable is followed by *Employment Status* and *Denominational Affiliation.*

Besides this, the fact that *Denominational Affiliation* is a significant predictor not only for community bound civic activism, but also for the involvement in organisations that serve people outside the religious community means that I can rule out the second of the possible minority/majority effects that could have distorted the findings.

Table 5

Logistic Regression Analysis.
Dependent Variable: Involvement in Charitable Organisations.[a]

Independent Variables	Odds Ratio	Sig.
Denominational Affiliation (Non-orthodox Christians[b])	**3,144**	0,011
Age	1,451	0,067
Gender (Female)	0,863	0,593
Income	**0,703**	0,009
Employment Status (Employed)	**3,260**	0,000
Educational Level	**1,781**	0,005
Trust (Trusting)	1,171	0,627
Constant	0,003	0,000

[a] For the categorical variables below, labels for higher values are given in parantheses.

[b] Excluding Uniates.

6. Conclusions

Orthodoxy shapes Romania's future. Regarding civic activism the Orthodox Church seems to have a decisive role to play. As the results of the quantitative analyses in this paper show, denominational affiliation is one of the most important predictors of organisational involvement. Apparently, the organisational culture conveyed by the Romanian Orthodox Church to its members is less conducive to civic activism than the organisational culture of the Catholic or Protestant Church in the country. The Orthodox Church attaches little value to civic activism, promotes an organic view of church, people and state and takes up a nationalist stance on societal issues. The latter is especially discouraging civic activism in Eastern Europe, because here, since 1989, civil society has had a strong international orientation. The differences in the organisational culture of the churches do not only manifest themselves in a higher rate of community bound civic activism, but also in a higher involvement rate in charitable organisations among Catholics and Protestants.

The research design of this paper combines approaches from political and social sciences, as well as organisational culture research. It provides a framework to analyse the impact of religious bodies on civic activism. Here, it was successfully applied to the Catholic, Protestant and Orthodox Church in Romania. Still, other case studies for Christian

churches are needed to compare their findings with the results obtained in this paper. Hopefully, in this way, the scheme for the evaluation of the organisational culture of religious bodies can be refined. It could be generalized to other religions, too, since the research design itself is in principle also applicable to non-Christian beliefs and religious bodies.

Today, religions play an increasingly important role in many societies around the globe. Given the fact that in some countries in Eastern Europe the churches gained ground *after* the democratic revolutions took place, we cannot expect that with the spread of liberal democracies, religious bodies lose power. Instead, they are likely to assert their position as a major societal actor for a long time to come. Knowing to what extent and in what direction they influence their members will therefore remain crucial to depict the future of the societies in which they activate. Until now, the Romanian Orthodox Church appears to have not been able to tap its full potential as a source for civic activism in Romania - which possibly is one of the reasons for the slow development of civil society in the country.

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IN PARTNERSHIPS WE TRUST: NGO-DONOR RELATIONS. A CASE STUDY OF ROMANIAN CIVIL SOCIETY SUPPORT AND DEVELOPMENT NGOS

Dan MERCEA, Andra Cătălina STOICA[1]

The present chapter aims to be an informed and critical reflection on NGO-donor relationships in Romania. In the post-communist years the NGO sector has burgeoned, as in Romania macro-social transformations have been in high gear. To take roots, the sector had to be assisted both financially and with know-how from abroad. This relationship, between donors and non-governmental organizations working to strengthen civil society has previously been considered in different Eastern European countries (Hann et al. 1996, 2002, Henderson, 2002). Herein, our focus has been on civil society support and development nonprofit organizations based in Cluj-Napoca, Romania.

We have investigated how cooperation between NGOs occurred in Romania; how they defined their missions, how broad or narrow the latter were and their effects on partnerships. Moreover, the reviewed literature informed

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1   This paper is based on an earlier draft to which Gabriel Bota contributed as part of the initial research team. In this version, the subchapter to which he made a contribution has been rewritten. We remain, however, greatly indebted to Gabriel Bota for his input and insights which we duly acknowledge.

us that donors were influencing to a degree, the strategies adopted by NGOs in their decision to partner. Thus, we looked both at partnerships between Romanian NGOs and their donors and the non-profits' partnerships with other NGOs within the sub-geographical context of Cluj-Napoca, one of the cities with the largest density of NGOs in Romania. We aimed to discern which were the conditions that would make partnerships between NGOs successful, and to what extent partnerships would broaden and deepen the sector, i.e. to include organizations that can work together to address issues that regard the development of the sector and its functions in the wider frame of our society.

Since the early days of the third sector in Romania, non-governmental organizations have had to recognize the need to carefully consider their donors' interests, priorities and formal requirements for applications, to appropriate the categories in the discourse of the latter, on civil society. Nonetheless, the competitive development of the sector pressed non-profits to build a portfolio of successfully completed projects while at the same time controlling for loyalty to mission statements. Such events, we will argue, have affected the growth of horizontal, NGO-to-NGO *genuine* partnerships.

Access to funds has been based on a competitive approach to allocation, by donors. This has led to the consolidation of the sector, i.e. with a limited number of *traditional* donors and a decrease in the number of their beneficiaries, due to conditions for market entrance. Grants have been regarded as an investment and consequently grant-makers have observed that their local partners have the right experience and expertise to use the money they were allocated. This may have been detrimental to both the expansion of the sector and also the scope of the NGOs' activities. To that extent, the latter have been compelled to establish a record of successfully completed projects to ensure their survival. This practice may have also been unfavorable to the development

of horizontal networks between nonprofits because of a focus on short term, quantifiable goals, broad mission statements and the inability to concentrate on the vision to develop the organization, partnerships and ultimately the sector.

We have been interested to see how these NGOs cooperated with their peers, their outlooks on partnerships, both on opportunities and constraints- from within and without the sector-that have shaped their vision on association. We wanted to know how the NGOs regarded requirements by donors, for horizontal partnerships, which have ostensibly been among the eligibility criteria for grants. Ultimately, we hoped to see if partnerships worked. A robust cooperation becomes possible when NGOs have a well defined mission and specialized activities. In this way, NGOs can support and complement each other, work together on common projects, as well as transfer information, know-how and competences among themselves.

The organizations we selected for our research carried out projects and programs meant to consolidate civil society in Romania. They involved, in their projects, other institutions and citizens. They tried to build networks between organizations, people and institutions. Their projects, consultancy and trainings aimed to prepare citizens for a better involvement in the problems their communities faced. They were seeking to increase citizens' civic awareness and to stimulate their participation in community development. Furthermore, they were contributing to the development of start-up organizations while also co-operating with the more established actors from the nonprofit sector. They were therefore likely to work together with other NGOs, to implement common projects, build partnerships and consolidate intra-sectoral networks[2]. Their creation and

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2   The authors of this paper have decided to anonymize the names of the NGOs that were included in this research project and also of the research participants. Our decision was based on the British

Sociological Association's guidelines for ensuring the anonymity, privacy and confidentiality of research participants; online, available from http://www.britsoc.co.uk/equality/63#Anonymity,%20 privacy%20and%20confidentiality, [20.05.2006]. Below is a brief description of the mission and activities for each organization. The information in the subsequent paragraphs was available on their web sites, at the time when the authors of this paper were deciding on a case-selection strategy, November 2005.

O1 has as its main mission "the mobilization of local financial resources for the benefit of the community". It therefore aimed to first develop partnerships between non-profit organizations, companies and citizens, with a vision to strengthen the former's capacity to raise funds. **O1's** stated role thus was to "work with the public and companies to get them involved, constantly and coherently, in the development of communities and the support of non-profit organizations". Secondly, it sought to promote an "efficient" environment for donors and not-for profits to cooperate in. Finally, the main tenet undergirding its work was its drive to "involv[e] clients/partners in the planning, implementation and evaluation of our projects"-ensure transparency. In a nutshell, **O1** trained NGOs to build a trustful relationship with their donors and other partner organizations. Ultimately, **O1** saw its mission to lie in its contribution to the sustainability of the non-governmental sector, "the long term…mobilization of local resources".

O2 had 31 clubs. The club in Cluj-Napoca was founded in 1990, and received legal personality in 2000. Its mission was "to strengthen the democracy in Romania through the stimulation of civic participation". Some of the main interests **O2** related to the following topics: "civic education", "citizens participation in the process of elaboration of public policies", "the defence of human rights".

O3 was founded in October 1992. Its mission, as described by its members, was "to stimulate local and regional development". **O3** had the following objectives: "to promote and implement local and regional development programs, to develop the relations between local government and population, to support local initiatives, to organize specialized consulting in various fields for local governments, to organize training courses for local public officials, to support the establishment and functioning of non-

development inescapably has to be considered in the broader context of historical transformations that have occurred in Eastern Europe at the turn of the last century.

Theoretical Background

Eastern European states have been at the receiving end of Western financial assistance and respectively of a knowledge transfer for the development of the NGO sector. If there has been an ideological underpinning of the intelligence and asset transfer to the East, this was an export of a specific set

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governmental organizations" (2006). **O3** addressed more than a single group of beneficiaries. They were civil servants, local government institutions, rural communities and, more generally, human resources in a community. **O3** had a regional office in Cluj-Napoca.

O4 was founded in January 1990 as a subsidiary of **04** Romania. Until 1998, **O4** implemented national programs at the local level. In 1998, **O4** became an organization developing its own programs, addressing issues at the county level. **O4** had as a mission the protection of human rights through all legal means. Concurrently, **O4** envisaged implementing several programs for the development of civil society: "consultancy in the elaboration of NGO projects", expertise for NGOs in writing financial applications, "organizational support programs", "organizational training programs".

O5 was founded in 1992 as an organization offering social services. In 1997 it became the first volunteering center in the country. In 2002 it was upgraded to a national centre for volunteering, with the central office in Cluj-Napoca. Its mission was to promote and develop volunteering "as a viable and irreplaceable resource in solving the problems that the Romanian society is now facing". The activities carried out by **O5** were guided by the following values: it "respects and militates for equal rights for all people without discrimination, promotes active involvement in community life, believes in the unlimited ability of each member to participate in solving the community's problems". The programs developed by **O5** were addressed to volunteering centers, state institutions, other not-for-profit organizations and businesses.

of expectations, particularly that "making civil society work is a question of socialization into democratic norms" (Mercer, 2002:11). Consequently, NGOs were assigned the role of "effecting the democratic transformations of developing societies into modern, liberal societies" (2002:11). In all fact, such expectations were hardly, critics asserted, counterbalanced by a context-sensitive concern with existing societal rifts (social status, religious, gender, regional etc.); or with the skewed development of the sector (in some cases according to donor priorities) and even the power struggles within NGOs (2002:13). A synthetic description of civil society in Eastern Europe was conducted by Salamon et. al (2000).

In Romania, donor assessments have alluded to a series of problems that have hampered the development of the NGO sector: "the NGO sector is a reflection of Romanian society as a whole, with 'them and us' between NGOs and government and lack of trust between individuals in the whole society" (Donor Review, 2000:27). This statement may be borne out of years of experience in the country but is nevertheless based on the assumption that there still is a long way to go, to reach the Western standards for the sector. Ironically, these standards appear to be contradicted by the empirical observations of that context. As one author who has looked comparatively at both settings argues, "the dominant Western model of civil society seems less conducive to social cohesion and successful economic performance than starkly opposed models of social order" (Hann, 1996:10).

In the region, many shortcomings and failures, along the way, have been explained as resistance to transformation due to the resilience of socialist mentalities, i.e. lack of private initiative, of trust, heavy dependence on state assistance. In the mid-nineties, when transformations were in full swing, civic anthropologists revisited earlier arguments and concluded that „in fact, many 'system-export' schemes fail

because systems or units are exported without their western context". Inconsistencies and breakdowns in Central and Eastern Europe may, in this regard, have also been upshots of the fragmentary knowledge about Western institutions (Sampson, 1996:125).

There is hardly any denying of the fact that there has been a lack of trust within the NGO sector, specifically, which further undermined the liberal mission of organizations. The latter may be, in a nutshell, "to work in partnership, build alliances and coalitions". In this regard, an assessment by a donor representative, of NGO performance, came to a dismal conclusion: "if they associate, at all, [it] is on a broader playing field and trying to do everything at once" (2000:32). With this statement in mind, a first postulate that the present study has been intent on verifying was what the role foreign donors played in the creation and subsequent supporting of partnerships between non-profits. Mercer's (2002) indications pointed to the fact that actually, donor-NGO dynamics may be a determining factor for non-cooperation within the sector.

Somewhat in contrast with donor evaluations of the specific circumstances of Romanian NGOs, the appraisal of the latter, of their situation, emphasized that NGOs have been able to develop their operational capacity (e.g. to implement projects and build partnerships). However, their "capacity to formulate vision, strategies and policies [was] generally very weak;…capacity to raise resources supportive of the mission [was] also limited, with a much greater focus on short-term survival than long-term change". These shortcomings were, and donors were aware of it, also an upshot of their funding priorities (Donor Review, 2000:33). Overall, NGO organizational strategies and vision have left, in spite of in-flowing foreign assistance, several key issues for the sector unresolved, i.e. accountability, shared working practices, scope of intra-sectoral cooperation, project partnerships.

The subsequent analytical sections stem out of a more detailed review of current debates about the development of the third sector which we embarked upon at the onset of this study and which we have not included here. This paper will progress towards analyzing donor-recipient relationships and their influence on the development of partnerships among NGOs in Cluj-Napoca. Our paper was guided by the tack sociological institutionalism has developed on the study of organizations and institutional cultures (Hall, 1996). We hoped to investigate both formal and informal practices, routines and conventions that demarcate the relationship not-for-profit organizations have with their donors. For the purpose of this paper we have regarded these relationships as institutions. We were subsequently interested to discern the perception that individual NGOs had on their rapport with their patrons, i.e. their attitude towards financing criteria, the relation between their mission and such criteria, the influence funding had on their partnerships with other nonprofits.

II. THE CONSOLIDATION OF THE THIRD SECTOR: PROBING INTO THE MEANINGS OF NGO REPRESENTATIVES

The main inspiration for this subchapter came from previous research conducted on the relationship between donors and NGOs in Russia (Henderson, 2002). Henderson has argued that foreign donors arrived in Russia with a mandate to develop civil society and consolidate the capacity of NGOs to part-take in the democratic governance of the frail Russian democracy (2002). The former were successful in providing NGOs with equipment and training to undertake these tasks, while also securing their survival at a time when the economy was in deep crisis (2003:141). However, donors' goal to ensure the development of the civil society was, critics have argued, stalled by their concern

with projects that focused on short-term objectives and produced "numbers for the report back to the home office" (2002:153). This, Henderson contended, led to NGO projects closely resembling one another and more importantly, to "the emergence of a vertical, institutionalized, and isolated (although well-funded) civic community" (2002:140).

"Partnerships" is the word designated to describe what may be a variable rapport between cooperating organizations (Lister, 1999: 2) which aim at buttressing civil society, e.g. not-for-profit civil society development organizations and their financial backers. The fact that partnership roles were asymmetric and the flow of money was always from donor to receiver, forcefully bound the latter into an agenda set by the former: "this is a dialogue of the unequal and however many claims are made for transparency or mutuality, the reality is…that donors can do to the recipient what the recipient cannot do to the donor" (Lister, 1999: 4).

Much of the research about the extraneous determinants of NFPO (not-for-profit organizations) operations has focused on transnational partnerships between international donor organizations and local recipients, in developing regions (Lister, 1999, Brown and Kalegaonkar, 2002). Financial dependence may produce the erosion of NGO "identities and legitimacy in their own eyes and the eyes of skeptics" (Brown and Kalegaonkar 2002:234). It can also feed into the perception that a grant-receiving not-for-profit organization represents the political, economic and cultural interests of their benefactors. Finally, it can induce the permanent financial dependence of NFPOs on exogenous, locally unsustainable resources (2002:235).

For an NGO, designing and implementing a project entailed finding a balance between its ethical and practical purposes. The ethical purpose of an NGO is stated in its mission, its values, and its principles. In our case, we understood the ethical purpose to refer to the "nonprofit

sector's civil society roles as…service providers and… builders of social capital" (Boice, 2005: 16). In contrast, the practical purpose entailed consolidating revenues to ensure survival, much like a profit-seeking company; "they allocate money toward a desirable goal and use management practices, information systems and public relations to carry out programs" (2005: 18). An objective of this study has been to analyze how nonprofits navigated between their ethical and practical purposes.

Herein we have set out to analyze how civil society support and development organizations reflected on the "structure of the funding" they received, first of all from foreign patrons (Henderson, 2002:155). The objective here was to see to what extent NFPOs developed their own agendas or reacted to the goals, logic and norms of their funding organizations. Specifically, we wanted to understand how in a project proposal, NGOs' missions and their donors' requirements were evinced. Another objective was to discern, based on the testimonies we collected, how the structure of funding was reflected in the development of horizontal networks. Finally, we considered the language that NGOs used in the communication with their donors. We were interested to learn whether the use of the donor's language influenced the structure of the organizations we researched and also, more generally, the nonprofit sector's culture. "Many service organizations have felt shut out because they cannot speak the language they feel donors want to hear or…they simply do not even bother applying for grants because they do not know how to shape their proposals" (2002: 156).

This subchapter was aimed at understanding if and how the relationship of the NGOs with their donors influenced their organization and their partnership with other NGOs. To arrive at this question, a set of propositions were constructed, drawing on arguments from previous literature on civil society, development and democracy. The scope of this

chapter is the generalization of our empirical findings to the theoretical arguments reviewed in previous sections. If grants have contributed to the consolidation of a vertical relationship between donor and recipient, the latter has determined not-for-profit organizations to concentrate on the practice of building a funding record. Consequently, there has been an emphasis on the relationship with donors, to the detriment of horizontal networks, due to staunch competition for grants.

Data Collection and Analysis

This was an in-depth analysis of the outlook civil society support and development NGOs had on their relationship with their donors. It was a case-study of this research problematic. Yin (1994:31) qualified the approach as a method for arriving at "analytic generalizations" that engenders the use of "previously developed theory…as a template with which to compare the empirical results". The focus of our project was narrowed down both geographically, to include organizations in one Romanian city which has the largest density of non-profits, alongside Bucharest (Review of Romanian NGOs, 2001) and thematically, concentrating specifically on civil society support and development organizations.

The main data collection method for this subchapter was the in-depth qualitative interview. It gave a broad scope to the interview subjects, to do an extensive interpretation of the topics discussed during our conversations. We used both an interview guide and standardized open ended questions. Our interviewees were classified as "experts" or "elites" (Quinn-Patton, 2002: 402), i.e. NGO leaders, managers, executive directors etc. The outcome was a set of stories based on a predetermined set of topics which were complemented by probes into contingencies and unrestrained comments by interview participants.

The research interviews were coded into topics that enabled reflection on answer patterns across the participants while also keeping particularities in sight. This initial stage of mapping the interviews played a seminal role in tackling the subsequent task of interpreting the story to ensue from our interaction with the participants. The methodology for this chapter was completed by adding narrative analysis and thematic content analysis to give scope to a synthetic assessment of material and cultural practices and representations built on a sociological institutionalist epistemic approach, herein to the study of non-profit organizations.

Narrative analysis is particularly suitable for interpreting data collected as *a story* (Lieblich et al, 1998: 2). "Narrators create plots from disordered experience, *give reality a unit that neither nature nor the past possesses so clearly*" (Cronon, 1992: 1349 quoted in Riessman, 1993:4). Analysis thus entailed the mapping of meanings constructed by respondents, in order to retrieve their interpretive context, their perceptions and practices, i.e. the opportunities and constraints in their setting, they identified and reflected on. Such meanings, in line with the sociological institutionalist episteme (see also Fischer's discussion of social meanings, 2003), were expected to structure the knowledge, beliefs, language and actions of these actors. Consequently, the major merit in using narrative analysis lay in the fact that it did not tamper with the meanings constructed by the respondents while examining how they were constructed.

Because this investigation proposed a context-sensitive take on the study of the relationship between NGOs and donors, a primary interest was to identify key notions and concepts participants used to describe and explain it. These we assembled into an inventory of "indigenous categories" (2002: 455) employed by interview participants. To go full circle, we designed a collection of *sensitizing concepts* that

"can provide bridges across types of interviews" (2002:348), to bring into our interpretation the theoretical propositions our work started from. Examples of sensitizing concepts were: *funding market*, *project requirements* etc. The next section in this chapter is a map of the interplay between indigenous categories and sensitizing concepts. The conclusion of this subchapter will summarize the main findings and discuss them in view of the normative statements on which our paper was grounded.

Content analysis is broadly understood as "any qualitative data reduction and sense-making effort that takes a volume of qualitative material and attempts to identify core consistencies and meanings" (2002:453). Taking reference from Singly et al. (1998:180), content analysis was herein employed for the study of the *themes*, the topics that were identified through theoretical delimitation, the formulation of the research question and working hypothesis for this section. If narrative analysis enabled the preservation of interviewee categories, thematic content analysis allowed us to discern the "structural logic" of the discourses retrieved from the interviews (1998:180). We used thematic analysis to patch together stories and discourses, into a series of dimensions, i.e. in the instance of the present research, concepts and practices embedded in a theme that can be concurrently analyzed across all interviews. In the words of Singly et al. this was a "vertical thematic analysis" which would expose variations and patterns across the principal dimensions of the investigation (1998:182).

The NGO-Donor Relationship: The NGO Perspective
Prerequisites to Building a Track Record
We started our interviews with the NGO representatives with a discussion about their relationship with their main donors, i.e. how they constructed and worked to consolidate it. A.H. noted that in the early days of the

post-communist Romanian civil society, there were many funding opportunities for the sector. This had been changing more recently due to Romania's accession to the E.U. in early 2007. It was initially foreign donors that "invested substantially in the sector and supported O5" (2006). "There have been changes along the way but this is not affecting our relationship with the donors, it just channeled applications towards one or another of their funding lines" (2006).

A key aspect in building a relationship with foreign donors was the setting up of personal contacts, a task easier to carry out at a time when the "Romanian market" was small. Over the years, having a track record with a funding organization spelled success in channeling more grants into the organization, from the same or other donors. Established donors were looking for the same one thing, the "experience…that you have the capacity to manage that money" (2006). A.H. subsequently emphasized that donors regarded this relationship as an investment they had "to keep and develop" (2006). As she explained, this was a key element in the strategy of the latter, i.e. "to invest constantly in the same organizations which have a chance to survive" (2006).

O1 was set up by a group of people who had been active in the sector, working specifically on assistance programs for NGOs. "Already, at that time [in 2002] the issue of how to raise funds was a significant one" (N.D. 2006). Hence, the members of O1 decided to pool together their resources -experience and know how- and "look beyond these projects", financed according to donor objectives (2006). A key fact in this appraisal was the short term support these grants offered to non-profits, seconded by the need to work "within funders' priorities" (2006). "This means to go into directions considered to be important [and identified] at the top, and this will be the case even more when we integrate into the European Union – all projects will finance an agenda that

is in concordance with what Brussels and the Romanian government define as priorities" (2006).

Considering the prerequisites for the development of a non-profit, N.D. explained that having a portfolio of projects successfully completed was a must as was a short term commitment to quantifiable and realistic goals. "You've been on the market for a while, you are a *credible* organization that wants to do something, and you meet people that want to listen to you" [emphasis added] (2006). This initial image we arrived at, about how to construct and maintain a relationship with donors, was further expanded with the insights brought by O.M., president of O4. "We sent applications to almost all funders in our field. So funders, in general, are traditional funders [working] in distinct fields… and I want to say that the majority of donors know what they give money for" (2006). Therefore, for a non-profit having a project portfolio on hand was a strategic plus because they could always "take out an idea and use it to send an application to a donor in the field" (2006).

In terms of how donors allocated funds, our interviewees pointed to what they perceived as implicit rules for allocation, i.e. time span, geographical focus etc. R.T., project coordinator in O2, pointed out that "there can be funders that only give [grants] once, to one organization" (2006). Ultimately, the sine qua non condition for a non-profit aiming to get funded was to have a track record. O.M. further qualified this statement. She explained that the first impression that donors had of their cooperation with an NGO would always be a long lasting one. In any case, donors, she explained, were bound by strict internal rules for allocating funds. "Big funders have precise rules. They can not finance an organization more than two times. This is both a legitimate and democratic conditioning because all [non-profits should have] a chance" (2006) to access funds.

F.C. talked about her organization's experience with constructing a relationship with donors. O3's experience had been to circumscribe its projects to agendas funding organizations they wished to cooperate with may have had. "This may be a weak point of our foundation but we don't usually go and knock on their door" (2006). Her understanding was that this practice ensured their projects blended in with their donors' programs. Such consonance was, she contended, preferable to an attitude she summarized with the phrase: "look, this is who we are and come on, support our activity" (2006).

Importing Categories to Develop the Organization: The NGO Lingua Franca

For all these non-profits, their main donors had been large funding organizations such as the Open Society Foundation, USAID, the Charles Stuart Mott Foundation and the E.U. principally through its PHARE program. Except for the PHARE program, communication with donors was in English. A.H. explained that having to communicate in English did not influence how the organization came to be structured. However, she recognized that "models from abroad had to be imported which were more or less adapted over time" (2006). This process of appropriating a pre-cast model was dictated by the state of affairs NGOs had to function in. "What I can say is that all the literature that got here and all the know-how about the sector came from abroad because the culture of non-governmental organizations did not exist" (2006). In any case, given the relative scarcity of available funds, all not-for-profit organizations had to have an English speaker among them. For Romanian NGOs, this became the make or break rule:

> "…an organization that doesn't have people
> who speak English has difficulties in access-
> ing certain resources and know-how…It's very

important that in an organization there is at least one person that knows English because this is the direction of the information flow…" (A.H., 2006).

All the other interviewees concurred with A.H.'s assessment. Fluency in English, the "lingua franca" (R.T. 2006) of the sector was "a perk for accessing resources. So English was a resource for an organization that wants to communicate well, specifically with foreign donors" (O.M., 2006). Furthermore, the above assessments of our participants, in the in-depth interviews, were also backed by the results in the analysis of perceptions NGO staff had on the topic. In terms of building a good relationship with foreign donors, respondents believed that being conversant in the donors' language was important and/or very important (83%). **Ultimately, this fact may have put additional strains on these organizations and their members. If they were of a financial kind, e.g. with training the staff, even though the utility of the expenditure would be well justified, it remains somewhat unclear why the more well resourced organizations would be slow or uninterested in using the local language.**

The Project Proposal and Funding Criteria

We asked our interviewees to describe how they developed a project proposal. F.C. observed that her organization started from the assumption that donors set up a funding line with a clear understanding of what projects and organizations they wanted to attract. For her organization, this perception became the iron law of project planning. "In fact [you have to understand] what donors want for that money because otherwise you stand no chance" (2006). Designing a project began with identifying donors that had programs in the same field of interest as the respective non-profit, R.T. explained. "You first of all have to find the idea that you

want to develop your project on, and then you try to find the funding organization whose goal is to finance activities in the same field" (R.T., 2006).

Overall, we were put across the picture that the design of a project proposal was a process that started with identifying financing programs donors may have had. Subsequently, an NGO had to "check whether your mission or goals match up with a funding line" (A.H., 2006). A.H. mentioned having heard of practices like "inventing needs that match funding lines" (2006). In as far as any ethical appraisals were put into project planning, A.H. made reference to "a moral decision" to be taken on "how much to swing the balance towards your needs or towards the financing line" (2006). It was, however, unavoidable for NGOs to stand by their practical purpose, before they could consider how to balance their mission with any constraints that were to come with funding.

The same idea came across from the interview with N.D. The exact timing for starting to write a project "depended to a large extent also on the funding opportunities on the market" (2006). N.D. shared her experience with project writing and explained that in her opinion, to start a project from scrap was a daunting task; this, because lacking experience translated into an inability to focus on the major outcomes one planned to attain. "Once you already have the experience and you've implemented several projects, ideas come from previous projects" (N.D., 2006). She added that it was, she believed, essential that the members who were on the ground, who had worked on previous projects, were co-opted in this planning stage.

Ultimately, our investigation was concerned with how these NGOs adjusted their projects to funding criteria donors may have had. Together with our participants we tried to come to an understanding of what were the main requirements their projects had to abide by. There was consensus that funds meant internalizing obligations

and being responsible for adhering to program guidelines. "Because I take the money, I am compelled in some way to stick to his (sic) expectations…to implement the project he (sic) gave me the money for… to demonstrate and justify my spending" (F.C., 2006). Thus, planning a project incurred careful multi-tasking: putting together a comprehensive project file, motivating an application, defining realistic objectives, assessing the likely impact.

Donors had been adamant about defining measurable goals, our interviewees expounded: "…if you didn't include enough clear indicators, numerical, you have to go back to that aspect and say how you will measure the impact of the project" (A.H., 2006). This meant that a successful project, regardless of for example, its long-term vision, had to be meticulous in defining short-term, quantifiable targets. Application terms such as this were part of formal requirements foreign funders had. It became apparent from all the interviews that these were never the object of any negotiations between donors and grant receivers. "There either is compatibility between the aims of the organization and those of the donors, or not" (R.T., 2006). In any case, the mission, the "intrinsic values" of an applicant organization should have never been the object of any bartering based on formal funding requirements, R.T. surmised. N.D.'s perspective complemented the above statements. She also talked about the careful consideration future grantees had to give to the application criteria. "There is no choice. I think it is very, very important to know before what they [the application requirements] are" (N.D., 2006).

These rigors and subsequent contract clauses were perceived as negative incentives for subsequent changes in the project, due to new developments in the implementation context, further down the line. "If you want to change something, this, in general, generates a lot of discussions and negotiations" (N.D., 2006). N.D. further qualified this observation by noting that one had to differentiate between

private and public funders, the latter being generally sensitive about procedures, this making post-application adjustments a daunting task (2006). D.S., referring to EU grants (e.g. PHARE civil society development grants), explained: "They are not necessarily interested in the result of our project. They are interested in the activities actually taking place" (2006). Contrary to that, private donors were seen to be more concerned about outcomes (D.S., 2006).

However, D.S., managing director at O3 observed, when making reference to practices in the sector, that some NGOs were, bluntly, "opportunistic" (2006). Donor priorities designated specific interest areas they would consider applications for, e.g. interethnic relations, provision of social benefits etc. Having this awareness, some NGOs would change their goals, vision etc, to match the respective funding priorities. D.S. saw his organization to be different from this latter type of non-profits. He explained that his organization's survival was the result of its being consistent with its mission. Nevertheless, they were "somewhat lucky because the way our mission is formulated, it is quite…it can include many fields, let's say" (D.S., 2006). For O3 that meant that it had never been in the unfortunate position of having to downsize its operations or shut down because it could not find funds for its projects.

From two of the testimonies we collected (of A.H. and F.C.), a puzzle ensued about the relationship between, on the one hand, commitment to program guidelines and on the other, putting ideas into practice. The main threat NGOs were generally faced with was to submit a half-baked project and later realize implementation could only be faulty. A flawed project, in a portfolio, could take a toll on future funding. More specifically, a damaged record was a dent in an NGO's reputation that could take a lot of resources to fix. "If in the past you had an unsuccessful project then the

respective donor will not give you any money a second time" (F.C., 2006). A.H. felt somewhat the same about running such a risk but she contended that some donors could be more flexible in their assessment: "sometimes we made mistakes and we told them that and we got funding to do what we had learned was wrong, to fix that…it's this system of *lessons learned* which they genuinely work with" (2006). Ultimately, closely following program guidelines was essential both in preparing a project application and during implementation. At none of these stages did these two organizations negotiate any clauses with their donors, based on their mission:

"you don't negotiate…in general there is an evaluation scheme that donors will publish…you get an answer and a score. You can sometimes submit a contestation…additional clarifications may be asked, generally about elements for the monitoring and evaluation of the project" (2006)

To conclude, NGOs aimed to do their best to stay in line with their donors' instructions for the grants they offered. If there was any fault in the implementation of a project that had been approved, it could have jeopardized an NGO's future, i.e. its capacity to secure subsequent funding. Therefore, the best option for the latter was firstly, to guide its activities in line with its practical purpose and ensure its survival and only subsequently to be concerned about staying faithful to its mission and ethical purpose.

The "Market", Competition and Horizontal Networking

Several of the questions in our interview guide probed into the developments the interviewees perceived the sector had undergone. We were interested to learn how they had created and maintained their horizontal network with partner organizations. Building a strong relationship with donors, over time, was tantamount to having an impeccable track record. A.H. likened NGOs to profit-seeking companies.

Funding was regarded as an investment donors made and which was tied to expectations of adequate deliverance. She compared the non-governmental sector to a market. Consequently, she perceived competition for funding between NGOs as being imminent. "One way or another, there is a market everywhere. There is also a market between NGOs, funding is limited and somehow we all compete for it"[3] (A.H., 2006). The market metaphor was used, successively, by several of our interviewees. A.L. also applied this trope to underline what she perceived to be a positive development, akin to a process of natural selection: "on the NGO market should survive only those organizations that do things right. The rest, like on any other market, will perish" (2006). A similar line of reason, a positive outlook on sectoral competition was also endorsed by R.T. He believed that the latter was both "healthy" and hardly a disincentive for partnerships and professionalism. Losing a competition for grants, he contended, was an opportunity for NGOs to assess their performance and "to research the field in which it [an NGO] put forward an application, so that it becomes credible for the next contest" (R.T., 2006).

Competing for the same resources made NGOs aware of one another. F.C. remarked that there was "envy" between not-for-profits (2006). This was the main downside of competition. On the positive side, she saw it as an opportunity to share learning experiences: "We learn from one another…we are happy if another organization receives some funds and has managed to implement a project" (2006). In contrast, N.D. put forward a perspective which didn't rest on the above dichotomy. Her argument was grounded on a further qualification of the need for

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3   Original quote in Romanian: "si intre ONG-uri este o piata, finantarile sunt limitate cumva, ne batem cu totii pentru ele sau ne batem impreuna pentru ele" (A.H., 2006)..

partnerships in the sector, also likened to a market. In her regard, organizations were well advised to partner with each other, in order to send a common and credible message on the market. "It is also a source of credibility when there are more organizations behind an initiative" (N.D., 2006). Partnerships were, therefore, perceived to be a solution for toning down any possible arguments among non-profits. "If everyone would do the same thing separately, this is a source of conflict between organizations, and the market would be bamboozled" (N.D., 2006).

A.H. explained that generally, funding organizations tried to encourage cooperation between non-profits. Her organization's mission, to promote volunteering, made cooperation a fundamental aim while also allowing it to be flexible in choosing partners. Finding a financing program was the initial step in project planning, for all these organizations. What followed was a research process aimed at assessing feasibility, finding beneficiaries and partners to work with. This phase was precursory to submitting the project. "Generally you first look for partners and not after…and many times partners help out in your relationship with the donors and to get a project accepted" (2006). F.C. observed that partnerships were desirable, depending on an NGO's mission. Some funding organizations required partnerships in the implementation of their projects. If this constraint was absent, NGOs generally tended to work individually. "…we also support one another if in certain circumstances such support is required but it's more about the fact that everyone is implementing its project" (2006).

Comments

The qualitative data from the in-depth interviews with NGO representatives of civil-society support and development organizations produced evidence backing the working hypothesis for this subchapter. The intent here was

to observe the perceptions of the interviewees in regard to their relationships to donors and the influence they exert on horizontal partnerships with other NGOs. The postulation this chapter commenced with was first confirmed and second, further qualified.

The structure of funding was likened to a market, in which a limited number of prominent, well-established organizations were able to build a track record of funded projects. The market was consolidated also because, as one interviewee explained, donors regarded grants as an investment and consequently wanted to ensure that their local partners had the right experience and expertise. This, as argued in the theoretical section of this paper, may have been detrimental to other, less experienced organizations and for that matter, to the overall development of civil society.

To extend our understanding of the latter problematic we considered the role that the drive to establish a financing record played in the development of horizontal networks between nonprofits. Interviewees explained that there was competition between NGOs and at worst even envy. They also expounded that funding organizations tended to encourage cooperation between grant receivers. However, if this was not a specific requirement for the financing programs, NGOs will have worked individually.

An organization's mission added a moral dimension to its pragmatic search to secure funding and ensure its survival on the market. In describing how a project proposal was developed, interview participants generally showed that the practical purpose of their organizations was the first to guide their activity. Thus, the first task in planning a project was to identify a funding opportunity and subsequently design the former in accordance with donor requirements. If this was not the case, NGOs would have had to have a stable source of income that would give them the leeway to experiment

with ambitious ideas (N.D., 2006). If an organization was in neither of the above two situations, it would have had to run based exclusively on volunteer support (O.M., 2006).

Starting from the early days of the third sector in Romania, NGOs have had to recognize the need to carefully observe donor interests, priorities and formal requirements for applications, to appropriate the categories in the discourse of the latter, on civil society. The latter was imagined as an autonomous zone where individuals and groups associate freely, keep the state in check, address community needs and create partnerships to foster democratic development and economic growth. Nevertheless, the competitive growth of the market, the need to build a portfolio of successfully completed projects while also controlling for loyalty to mission statements were disincentives for horizontal, NGO-to-NGO *genuine* partnerships. The next subchapter discusses, in more depth, the topic of such partnerships and shows that there was, at the time of this research, general reluctance towards formal requirements for partnering. That meant that NGOs did associate in several ways but, generally, their representatives felt that this outcome was not the result of any top-down pressure. Rather, it was a *natural* process, inspired by common interests and goals, willingness to assist peers and, more broadly, changes in context-political, social and economic.

One conclusion this chapter arrived at was that partnerships were forestalled by grants for two reasons. Firstly, because of the strong competition for funding which forced organizations to either have broad mission statements or work exclusively with volunteers. If this was the case, then broad missions would have induced a reluctance to cooperate, for fear of overlapping interests, strategies and visions. As one interviewee noted, overcoming this situation would have incurred the further specialization of NGO missions

and a consequent complementing of their activities. The process had started and, as another interviewee explained, it was bound to continue as the structure of funding was also changing, i.e. through increased funding from EU structural programs. But this was a process of consolidation that may have had a centripetal effect on the sector. Intermediary organizations, grant-makers and resource centers would have to become a buffer for this process if the NGO sector was to continue expanding quantitatively and to enhance the quality of its output. Secondly, partnerships may have been constructed, albeit in order to abide by application criteria and to build a strong record. Nevertheless, the short-term focus of grants and the need to offer realistic targets for each project (i.e. quantifiable, to be included in progress and evaluation reports) may have impeded long-term partnerships, the development of the organizational capacities of NGO networks and their vision for consolidating the sector.

Finally, reading into the meanings put forward by the interviewees also gave scope to the articulation of a conclusion on the dynamics between the state and the third sector. In the Romanian context, the relationship between the two was not at all static as previous models designed in other circumstances postulated (see Salamon, 2000). Rather, the third sector appeared to be both critical of the performance of the state and at the same time optimistic about the future cooperation with public authorities. We leave this topic for further exploration elsewhere but one key aspect to note here is that the state has become, with EU accession, an intermediary in the EU grant schemes. To that extent, future research (e.g. on regime theories, the EU governance system) may find a noteworthy puzzle in the new interaction between the state and the non-profits.

III. BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS IN THE THIRD SECTOR; THE PERSPECTIVE OF NGO STAFF

In this subchapter we aimed to look at aspects which determine NGOs to associate, and analyze the perceptions of the latter on intra-sectoral cooperation. We started with a focus on donors' requirements for NGOs to associate in projects and discussed the perceptions of NGO members and staff on this type of collaboration. We were interested in observing the relationship between donors and NGOs and the influence this relationship had on horizontal partnerships among NGOs. To recreate an image of how NGOs developed networks of collaboration we subsequently wanted to know how information, know-how and volunteers circulated from one NGO to another.

We formulated the above objectives based on a research question in which we considered how partnerships emerged and why the operation of NGOs brought only limited horizontal association in the third sector. We systematized this question in a working hypothesis in which we proposed that if partnerships between NGOs occur most frequently as a result of donor requirements- i.e. as a constraint on receiving grants or as a requirement for project implementation-this would lead to a discontinuous cooperation between non-profits. Moreover, competition for funding will have limited, to a certain extent, the specialization of NGOs' missions with NGOs trying to cover as many topics of interest for donors as they could. A clear and specific mission and objectives could have paved the way to horizontal, *genuine* partnerships between non-profits which could have strengthened the sector and ensure its long-term development.

Adapting our approach: using mixed methods

We operationalized our hypothesis through a set of variables we included in a questionnaire to be used in structured interviews. We consequently conducted a survey

on a non-probabilistic sample of NGO members and staff. We used a mixed methods approach to design our questionnaire, recruit our participants and analyze the ensuing data.

The adaptive theory approach is a mixed-methods technique for data gathering and analysis (Layder 1998:39). It endorses the use of various research methods in order to increase the amount of knowledge collected (information, data) which could lead to amplifying "the potential for theory generation" (1998:42). Using both quantitative and qualitative data we were able to develop a pool of information about the research group under study; they complemented each other and made possible a more profound examination of the research topic.

We used a sub-type of purposive sampling, "theoretical sampling", one of the main two data-sampling techniques in quantitative research (Layder 1998:46) to select "…events, people, settings and time periods in relation to the emergent nature of theory and research" (Layder 1998:47). We started from an understanding that in our case empirical data and theory would be coterminous: "the researcher is enjoined to collect and analyze the data simultaneously so that there is immediate feedback from the data collection which in turn suggests various implications for theory-generation." (Layder 1998:47). In a subsequent phase, based on what she/he has found until that moment, the researcher will gather new information to expand the theoretical ideas.

In line with the adaptive approach, people and events have to be included gradually in the sample "through the combined forces of prior theoretical ideas or models and the collection and analysis of data in relation to them" (Layder 1998:47). Only in this case we can think about a "'true' theoretical sampling" (1998:47). In our turn, we arrived at our samples through detailed interviews. Consequently, sample size was not as pressing a concern as it is for probability samples. The expectation hence was that case-selection

would provide particularly relevant data for generating new insights into our research topic.

We applied twenty three questionnaires to the members and staff of the organizations from our sample (4 – O5, 5 – O2, 4 – O1, 6 – O3, 4 – O4). The questionnaire was self-administered. We designed the questions based on the interviews taken in the first phase of our research, the Review of Romanian NGO Sector (2001), and the Donors' Review (2000). The questionnaire had twenty one items. We envisaged enriching our data from the interviews through this questionnaire, to come up with a broader understanding of the relation between NGOs, and between NGOs and donors, to strengthen our grasp of our research problematic. We decided to apply this questionnaire to what we regarded as information-rich respondents, actively involved in the work of their organizations, e.g. in project writing, project management, networking with donors and other NGOs.

In our questionnaire we opted for closed questions and a small sub-set of open-ended questions wherein respondents could complete and refine some of their answers. Such open-ended questions asked them to consider the state of the non-governmental sector, the most frequent forms of cooperation between NGOs, how they regarded NGO members who left an organization, or the factors that determined them to choose working for a certain organization. With their answers to these open-ended questions we expanded our interpretation of the answers to the closed questions (Singly et al., 1998:65). Finally, we also collected socio-demographic data about our respondents.

This was a systematic approach that referenced the conclusions of the previous subchapter, checked for the consistency and accuracy of findings therein, and extend the breadth and depth of our investigation (Fischer 2003:154). Our questionnaire was a means to ensure consistency, in spite of this change of scale, also allowing us to develop the range of data we gathered. Ultimately, this was not a statistical

test (Van Evera, 1997:29), but we envisaged our approach as an opportunity to compare our theoretical propositions and the views of NGO leaders with the perceptions of the NGOs' members and staff. We also hoped that by using the categories from the interviews we would compensate for not using the "I don't know" and "I cannot answer" response options in our questionnaire (Singly et al., 1998:67).

The Perception of NGO staff on Third Sector Partnerships

Cooperation in the NGO Sector. Project partnerships demanded by foreign funders were rare (47% of respondents believed so). Funds stimulating cooperation had been available for joint applications and there were even "bonus points" for applications made together by non-profits (A.H., 2006). However, A.H. did not think she could identify "a pattern" in application submission, i.e. a trend in collective applications. "But I expect that in the future because of the system of European structural funds…serious changes will occur" (A.H., 2006). This finding was in line with previous arguments, in the Review of Romanian NGOs. One likely explanation for this outcome was offered by D.S. (2006). He contended that, "generally, foreign funders design a strategy based on the needs in their home countries" (2006). In a subsequent phase, the latter present their plans to NGO leaders in Bucharest or academics who are at some distance away from the problems of the likely beneficiaries. Therefore, "some funding lines may open for several topics which are not perceived as priorities by NGOs or the beneficiaries" (D.S., 2006).

Contrary to that, partnerships initiated together by NGOs were, respondents claimed, frequent and/or very frequent (74%). Rather than teaming up to become eligible for a funding application, we understood that non-profits would partner to increase their operational capacity (A.H., 2006) or to support the development of the sector (D.S., 2006, N.D., 2006). Overall, partnerships between NGOs

were, in our respondents' assessment, frequent and/or very frequent (83%). Finally, cooperation outside projects was very frequent (for all the questions in the questionnaire, on this topic), i.e. participation at events organized by NGOs, discussions, round-tables, petition-writing etc. This last point had previously been made by O.M. who said that her organization participated in "the big debates that take place in Cluj" (2006). They concerned the sector and more generally, the local community.

Formal structures of cooperation were regarded as a constraint, "viewed negatively because they are thought to comprise autonomy" (Review of Romanian NGO Sector, 2001:33). The authors of this review offered the legacy of former centralizing totalitarian organizations as an explanation for this phenomenon, they identified through their research. Nevertheless, both in our analysis of the in-depth interviews and later in our network analysis we have found that the NGOs we studied were participating in formal structures of cooperation. Based on such observations, we posit that the intensity of their engagement in such structures fluctuated according to their short-term objectives, their concurrent involvement in other projects, the lack of constant financial support for the development and maintenance of NGO coordination centers, and for encouraging participation in them. This proposition needs further testing, to be undertaken elsewhere. The evidence we built it on also came from D.S.'s (2006) statement that "on the one hand, there is no financial support, on the other there is not enough time" for NGOs to join extended structures of sectoral cooperation.

Cooperation among organizations with a different mission and goals was also rare (69% wrote that such partnerships were rare and or very rare). However, a possible explanation for its occurrence may have resided in D.S.'s argument that, for instance, his organization would team up with other non-profits when they were asked to. This happened even

though they were not active in the same area. In any event, he would have favored partnerships with organizations that had a mission and a vision similar to that of O3, and only offer specific advice for other non-profits applying for funding in other interest area. "We even helped them to write the applications" (D.S., 2006).

Cooperation among NGOs with similar missions, goals, objectives, respondents claimed, was frequent and/or very frequent (a total of 82%). To take an example, O3 and O4 were both organizations that were partners in several NGO networks. These were either umbrella organizations, i.e. both these organizations were members of the 'Civic Local Council' (*Consiliul Civic Local*), or ad-hoc project partnerships. The latter differentiation was also discussed by O.M. (2006).

Networks were important also because NGOs that would consider implementing a project outside their immediate geographical area had to necessarily become partners with other non-profits from the particular community they would arrive in (A.H., 2006). Ultimately, A.H. believed that, to take the example of volunteering centers, even though there may have been demand for volunteers, in a distinct context, identifying partners was just as important as addressing this demand (2006). "We can't take that risk [not to have partners] because I'm accountable to the donor and I have to return their money back if I didn't do what I promised to" (A.H., 2006). NGOs were thus, first and foremost, aware they had to partner-up for pragmatic reasons, i.e. to complete a project or to address needs greater than their organizations could handle alone.

Knowledge and information sharing and volunteer exchanges were frequent and/or very frequent (82%), respondents showed. The frequency of this type of cooperation was confirmed in the Review of the Romanian NGO Sector (1999:31). The know-how and the experience obtained in project writing and through project implementation circulated from one organization to another, in the non-profit

sector. NGOs seemed to be very willing to help the others with this kind of resources. Experts from one organization would lend their abilities to help other NGOs, when asked to. O.M. outlined this practice, in the case of her organization: "…I can say that from the 11 members of the O4 team, at least three or four work permanently as specialists in other projects carried out by other organizations, too" (O.M., 2006).

Key Factors in NGO – Donors Collaboration

In our respondents' evaluation of NGO-donor collaboration, first, a history of previous projects undertaken by the NGOs was very important, as was the trust that donors put in the NGOs they financed and finally, the mission of the latter. We were presented with a similar perception, throughout all the in-depth interviews, of the need for trust donors had. Trust came from "the consolidation… of the relationship at the institutional level" (R.T., 2006) and the potential in each project for successful implementation. That consequently meant that one may have envisioned the gradual consolidation of the sector, also because of the constant need for trust. Nevertheless, it looked like, in terms of trust, there was only a unidirectional relationship, with our respondents conjecturing that their trust in donors was comparatively less important (39% believed it was not important).

We understood that a strong portfolio and the capacity for innovation in a project were fundamental for the financial survival of a non-profit. Secondly, donor objectives also seemed to be highly important (92%) for cooperation and ultimately NGOs' securing of funds. Project evaluation-of implementation and impact- both medium and long-term, undertaken by NGOs, was also very important for a positive relationship with donors. Finally, need-based assessments of the circumstances of project beneficiaries were in their turn deemed very important, respondents wrote (86%).

We were somewhat puzzled by the fact that our respondents perceived their trust in funders to be less important in their cooperation with grant-makers. If overall, the lack of trust was detrimental to partnerships, coalitions, and prioritizing (Donor Review, 2000:32), we postulate that trust in funders was an issue on which there was comparatively less emphasis because of a deeply engrained affinity, of the non-profits, for their benefactors. To better grasp this finding we turned to the Romanian Donor Review. The latter has mapped the eschewed history of the NGO sector in Romania. "Donors played an important role in the formation and development of the NGO sector…it is to be expected that their perceptions and visions will have shaped it" (2000:30).

If the above explanation was also an expression of the vertical accountability of NGOs to their funders, in terms of the internalized institutional practices that the former have absorbed since the creation of the sector, we felt we had to probe for the sensitivity non-profits had for the Romanian context. We were not particularly concerned with the effectiveness of their services for their beneficiaries but rather with the relationships built within the sector. We understood both from the questionnaires and the in-depth interviews that working and personal relationships, formal and informal interactions, were quite common. However, an unresolved puzzle was the perception that donors had that it was a lack of trust within the sector which generally led to a reduced number of partnerships, some degree of mis-coordination in the sector and even the spawning of pragmatic and opportunistic non-profits. We attributed such developments to the competition for funding, to funding priorities donors had, to the broad focus of NGO missions and the lack of funding alternatives.

A very large proportion of the respondents believed they understood well, or very well what were: their donors'

priorities (95%); the way their funders operated in (87%); the factors their funders' activity was constrained by (78%). An organization like O1 was founded by experts from within the sector who were aware of these constraints and also had a vision of how to gradually overcome them. Donors were reducing the scope of their funding and moving out of the region and were leaving behind a sector that not only had to struggle for resources (Review of the Romanian NGO Sector) but perhaps also lacking a clear understanding of how to use the concepts they had appropriated, to apply them henceforth. Even though the sector was consolidating, there were bound to be many more twists and turns in its development.

Partnerships with other NGOs were deemed to be important and/or very important for the cooperation of these NGOs with their donors (69%). We interpreted this result as a possible incongruence between the representation of donor induced partnerships (negative perception) and the actual practice of partnering with other NGOs, to qualify for a grant. NGOs could therefore associate to fulfill donor requirements, even though they were adverse to this claim. Furthermore, a knowledge and information transfer from foreign donors to NGOs, the latter deemed was highly important for their organization. In contrast to that, a similar transfer from other NGOs was comparatively less important for these organizations. This in spite of the fact that, our respondents claimed, knowledge and information sharing was very frequent among NGOs.

Horizontal Partnerships: Cooperation vs. Competition

We also wanted to look, comparatively, at the perceptions the staff of these NGOs had, on the one side, of their cooperation with other NGOs and, on the other, of the competition between projects put forward by organizations with similar missions. We asked them how important a series

of factors identified in the literature was, for the functioning of their organization. 73% of respondents believed their organization's relationship with other NGOs was important and/or very important. 70% of them also conjectured that competition was also important and/or very important. Of our respondents, 93% saw partnerships as an opportunity for their organization. 74% of them believed they were not problematic for their organization when they would engender an unequal rapport between partners. 61% believed that the specifics of each organization's activity were important in a partnership and respectively 75% regarded long-term financial support for cooperation of little importance.

We subsequently asked how important the following factors were, for partnerships between NGOs: projects previously undertaken together (75% of respondents deemed them as important and/or very important); the mission of the other organizations (86%). Fewer of them believed personal relationships were important (61% important and/or very important, 39% of little or no importance); 87% believed that donor requirements to partner were important and/or very important; 83% considered that other organizations' need to enter into partnerships were important and/or very important; 87% thought that important and/or very important was to partner in order to address community problems. Finally, respondents were split about the importance of the reputation of an NGO when considering a partnership (48%-of little or no importance, 52% important and/or very important).

As we could see from these answers, the mission and the specialized activities of an organization were important and very important for considering a future partnership. In general, NGOs kept a good rapport with other organizations, but they preferred to associate in projects with other non-profits from their field of activity. R.T. underlined this fact when discussing relationships in the sector:

"We know, we are involved, we have relationships with the majority of NGOs, but…the primary relationships are with those organizations which have as objective citizens' information, missions or volunteer involvement in certain specific problems of the community, public integrity, institutional transparency, civic education. These are the institutions, organizations we collaborate with more frequently [i.e. the organizations from the same field as O2" (2006)

D.S. agreed, in what he said, with R.T. Moreover, he emphasized how important it was for a partnership that the NGOs belong to the same interest area. His organization preferred to cooperate with organizations which were not located in Cluj, but had the same focus as O3 (2006). Partnerships were more likely to register the successful implementation of a project, to be a gainful experience for all the involved non-profits, and for the sector at the same time, when organizations had a well-defined mission. The latter had to draw the boundaries of the specific niche of interests they were concerned with, and their beneficiaries. N.D. pointed out that through "specialization", "the fear of working together" (2006) would be minimized. She thought that organizations which had a broad mission and common beneficiaries felt insecure when working together on projects. As she explained, "from the outside they could be seen as one organization being more powerful [than the other]" (2006). Finally, when discussing the issue of "specialization and complementarity", N.D. gave the example of her organization, O1, and O5, two non-profits supporting the development of civil society, both covering a certain field without overlapping their missions, i.e. "financial resources mobilization" and "volunteering", respectively (2006). In addition, the specialization of an NGO helped attract funds more easily on the long term.

Comments

In this subchapter we discussed different types of cooperation in the third sector, how they emerged, and what factors influenced them. What we have learned about collaboration between NGOs at the donors' request, as it became apparent from the answers of our respondents, was that it occurred quite rarely, in comparison to other forms of partnership. NGOs were willing to associate particularly with organizations having similar missions and objectives. Working together with organizations with different mission and objectives was sanctioned if it was outside projects. In the first case, it was important that organizations had a specific mission and a specialized area of activity, in order to complement each other, and in this way to avoid competition or the fear of it. Outside projects NGOs cooperated in different events; they exchanged information, know-how, expertise, they helped each other when they were asked to.

Another important issue was that of trust: donors' trust in NGOs, NGOs trust in their donors and NGOs trust in each other. We observed that donors' trust in NGOs was central when evaluating projects for funding. On the contrary, our respondents' answers showed that their organizations did not consider their trust in donors to be important for vertical partnerships. Within the NGO sector, however, there seemed to be an inherent lack of trust which limited collaboration between organizations.

A strong debate in the sector related to finding alternatives to foreign funding. NGOs were well advised to try to attract funds from private local companies, multi-national companies, Romanian private foundations, and the local and central administration. Finally, NGOs had to learn to adapt to new funding circumstances, and learn to convince these potential donors to get involved in the community, through their projects.

IV. NGO NETWORKS: AN OUTLOOK

Generally, civil society is strengthening democracy, but a well-developed civil society is buttressed by a strong institutional backbone formed by NGOs. Building networks between NGOs is not necessarily straightforward, or, in other words, the process has several particularities. First, networks seem to be created mostly by NGOs with similar declared missions or following the same goals. Abelson surmised: "NGO networks vary in the extent to which they have been formalized, representing coalitions of organizations with similar goals" (2003:2). On the other hand, creating cooperation networks between NGOs depends also on donors, firstly because in most of the situations donors have specific funding interests and secondly because there is a limited number of donors on a market. Ultimately, they provide the material support for establishing such networks and some of the strategic and moral constraints the latter are confined by.

One question for which we went back to the literature was "how effective are NGO networks at strengthening the NGO sector?" (Abelson, 2003:2). When creating networks, NGOs become more credible in front of the donors when they apply for grants, and have a better chance of being funded. More than that, such networks help NGOs develop, for example through knowledge sharing. Thus, creating networks "begins with communication" (Abelson, 2003:6). Networks are open structures, able to expand without limits, "integrating new nodes as long as they are able to communicate within the network" (Edelman, 2003:3). Communication between NGOs from a network facilitates an information exchange which helps the development of every NGO and the tertiary sector, overall.

Networks encourage organizations to share how they develop strategic plans, fostering long-term sustainability. Funding could often draw NGOs to a particular issue but "networks can help organizations become more sustainable

through strategic planning" (Abelson, 2003:8). In spite of many perceivable benefits, horizontal partnerships between non-profits may be constrained by many circumstantial factors that influence both particular organizations and the broader environment they function in. If partnerships generally bring together NGOs with similar goals and missions, competition for funding may inhibit their willingness to cooperate. This proposition has been discussed in the preceding subchapters. However, the literature ensuing from the Romanian context has showed that when they are ready to associate, non-profits would do so with a genuine regard for cooperation- identifying needs, beneficiaries and solutions in the communities they work with and alongside other partner organizations- and not simply respond to donor requirements. This subsection briefly develops on these propositions. We used the same sample of NGOs as in the previous subchapters.

The social network perspective encompasses theories, models, and applications that are expressed in terms of relational concepts or processes. It is situated at the intersection of social theory, empirical research and formal mathematics and statistics (Wassermann and Faust, 1994). There are several fundamental principles that give the specificity of this perspective, among which the crucial one refers to the centrality it gives to the idea of the interdependence of actors and their actions, unlike most inferential statistics models that conceive actors as atomized entities. Social Network Analysis (SNA) places the emphasis on actors and the relations between them, as opposed to other perspectives focusing on actors and their individual attributes.

By analyzing relational data and the ties or the interactions between the elements of the structure, we are able to get to data that cannot be reduced to characteristics of the social system, and thus which cannot be highlighted by analyzing an aggregate of the elements that make up the social system.

SNA conceptualizes structure as lasting patterns of relations among actors and contributes to the outlining of the characteristics of the social structures and of the elements' position in these structures (Wasserman and Faust, 1994).

The present study focused on the existing ties between 5 NGOs from Cluj-Napoca; we consequently analyzed several social networks referring to the same group of actors, each corresponding to a different content of the ties (Wasserman, 1994). More specifically, we looked at three types of relations between these NGOs: formal relationships, represented by their past or present collaborations; the possibility of initiating formal relationships in the future (collaborations or partnerships in future projects); informal relationships between the members of an organization with members of the other organizations.

The method of data collection we have chosen was the phone survey. Our questionnaire was made up of three questions, each operationalized for a specific type of network. One member from each of the five NGOs replied to our questionnaire- the first person to answer the phone. We chose this selection method because the questions focused on general problems concerning these organizations, and that was why we expected any member of the organization would have been able to answer these questions (by chance, the individuals who picked up the phone and thus answered the questions were persons occupying leading positions in these organizations).

To sum up, we analyzed three different social networks, referring to the same group of social units, which we identified for the purpose of our study to be civil society support and development NGOs, based in Cluj-Napoca. The first social network we considered was the formal network, and the formal relationships between the NGOs, represented by present or past collaborations or partnerships. The second social network we observed was based on the NGOs declared readiness to collaborate, formally, in future projects, with

the others NGOs. The third social network we examined was based on the declared existence of informal relationships between members of one organization with members of any of the other four organizations, the network of informal ties.

Data Description and Interpretation

Have (do) you collaborated (collaborate) with the following non-governmental organizations from Cluj, in projects undertaken by your organization?

Figure 1: Past/present collaboration among the five NGOs
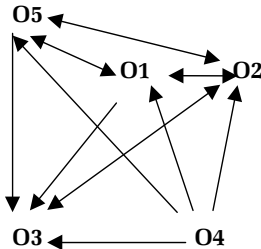
As Figure 1 shows we identified ten ties (four bidirectional and six unidirectional relationships) among the five NGOs under study. We were puzzled by the fact that there were more unidirectional relations than there were bidirectional ones. We surmised that very likely due to limits in our design and response imperfections our participants' accounts about current/past collaborations appeared incongruent. To give one example, we asked our participants to try to recollect the history of partnerships with other organizations but not all of them were familiar with their organizations' past engagements since their establishment. Further analysis would have to explain and qualify the reasons for this occurrence.

In order to describe the centrality of the nodes of this graph, we only referred to *degree centrality* and left aside the measures for *closeness* and *betweeness* that would be more appropriate for larger networks. A high in-degree centrality

was a measure for the degree to which an organization was recognized by the others as a past or present partner in projects. The out-degree centrality in this case was more closely related to the self perception of an organization as being in partnership with the others. Bidirectional ties indicated the mutual recognition of the partners and could have been an indicator for a greater importance of those partnerships than those which were only signalled by one of the parties involved.

Organizations O3 and O2 had the maximum in-degree centrality (indicator =1), as the existence of a partnership with them was signalled by all the other organizations; they were followed by O5 and O1 (indicator =0.75) that were chosen by 3 other organizations each. The more peculiar case was node O4, which had the lowest in-degree centrality (indicator =0). This organization reported being linked to this local network of NGOs with similar goals, a statement which was not corroborated with those of the other participants. Again, stressing the limitations of the data we were analyzing, we can hypothesise about the relative isolation of this node from the rest of the network, apart from its own perception.

If an application for a funding program would require partnerships with another non-governmental organization from Cluj, which of the following organizations would you collaborate with?

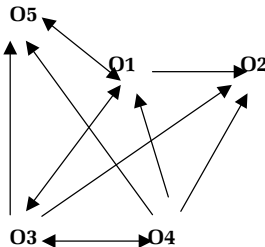Figure 2: Readiness for future collaboration among the five NGOs

Figure 2 shows that four of the organizations named one partner organization which was also ready to collaborate with them in the future- three bidirectional relationships. However, there were a larger number of cases -five unidirectional relationships- in which the intention of one organization to associate with another from the five was not reciprocal. The network of the five NGOs that formed, using this criterion, measured the readiness to be involved in future projects. The in-degree centrality was here related very much to the prestige or popularity of the organization, while its out-degree centrality referred to its actual willingness to cooperate in the future. O1, O2 and O5 were the most popular potential partners for future projects (indicator $=0.75$). O4 continued to have the lowest in-degree centrality, being the least recognized of all the organizations (indicator $=0.25$). However, it did not remain entirely isolated from the rest of the network, as there was one organization that named it as a potential partner.

In terms of their readiness to become associated with other organizations from this set, O4 and O3 had the highest out-degree centrality (indicator $=1$), as they were willing to cooperate with all the other institutions. O2 (indicator $=0$) and O5 (indicator$=0.25$) were the least inclined to form partnerships. The most recognized organizations from this group were the ones less inclined to associate themselves with the others in the future. We surmised, looking at the history of these latter two organisations that their track record with donors, their public visibility and their membership in other project networks and umbrella organisations may have been a reason for this outcome. Contrary to that, O4 seemed to have operated a change in its mission focus and engaged more in partnerships with public authorities (O.M., 2006). However, it was keen on developing future partnerships within the sector. The changing structure of funding may have been a determinant for this course of

action (O.M., 2006) Overall, O3 appeared to be the most pro-active organization in our sample, as far as partnerships, both present and future, were concerned.

Do you have an informal relationship (friendship etc) with the members of the following organizations?

Figure 3: Representation of informal relationships the interviewed representatives stated they had with any of the members from the NGOs quoted in our question
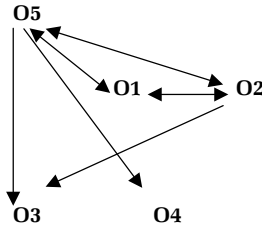
O3 and O4 had the lowest possible out-degree centrality (indicator=0), meaning that they declared that they did not have informal relationships with any of the other organizations. However, they were mentioned by at least one other NGO. The small clique[4] between O1, O2 and O5 that was present in the first graph (referring to past or present collaborations) was also present in the informal relations one. Members of these three organizations mutually acknowledge their participation in projects and the fact that they had informal relations with each other. The clique was, however, missing in the graph that was formed on the basis of the organizations' willingness to cooperate in the future. We postulated that this absence may have been caused by the fact that it was likely that neither informal relationships, nor any past cooperation will have had a fundamental bearing on future partnerships between these organisations. To that

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4   A clique represents the maximum number of actors who have all possible ties present among themselves.

extent, returning to the findings in the previous sections, we expected that at least one other factor may have had a significant influence on this outcome-the specifics of future projects. That is, depending on requirements for future projects, these organisations may have decided what organisation to associate with. Ultimately, this brought the donors back into the picture, as well as the idea of weak partnerships and all the drawbacks in the process of market consolidation we have previously discussed.

We must stress again the limitations of the data our analysis was based on: this study could not establish who the actual members in an organization were, with which respondents had stated they had an informal relationship. Also, organizations differed in size and the number of people active within them. Finally, the questions we asked did not prompt respondents to also make reference to past and not only present informal relationships with any of the members of the other organizations.

Comments

With this subchapter we hoped to begin to understand how these five NGOs from Cluj-Napoca were interacting or had interacted. We hoped to produce a tentative map of the relationships between them, and offer a limited set of criteria these relationship were based on. We were also interested to see whether these five NGOs had built any networks between them. Any expectations we may have had regarding partnership networks came from one of our main reasons for having researched this sample of NGOs from Cluj-Napoca; the fact that they all espoused one similar goal- the support and development of the institutionalized civil society.

Our study reviewed theoretical propositions that expounded the idea that the existence of horizontal relationships between NGOs strengthened civil society, and

helped every NGO to further its aims. In analyzing the concept of NGO partnerships, we found two important dimensions: partnerships for projects and informal partnerships. Thus, herein, based on this systematization, we hoped to see which one of the two types of partnerships would more likely inform our respondents' decision to collaborate with NGOs from our sample and others.

The comparison of the densities of the three different networks was interesting in this respect. The network with the highest density[5] was the one referring to the past or present collaborations (10 existing ties out of the 20 that are possible, 0.5). The density of the informal ties network was smaller, only 0.3 (6 existing ties out of the 20 that would be possible). The density of the network referring to their willingness to collaborate in the future lies in between these values, namely 0.45.

Ultimately, we were left with the conundrum: in spite of the stories we collected in our interviews, about horizontal partnerships, and which resonated with findings in other studies that had dealt with the development of the Romanian NGO sector, our tentative network analysis somewhat blurred the expectation that *genuine* partnerships would be more desired if not yet present. Contrary to that, we observed that partnerships appeared to be, first and foremost, instrumental for projects and not a heuristic category for the development of the sector. This inference brought us back to the discussion we referenced earlier about the ideological underpinnings upon which the tertiary sector was grounded on in Romania.

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5   These values are obtained if the three graphs are regarded as non-directed ones, and no difference is made between unidirectional and bidirectional ties. If we are to take into account the fact that they are signed graphs, the values of the densities are all smaller than those indicated here, but their order remains the same.

V. CONCLUSION

This project has allowed the authors to consider and contribute to a broad debate about the Romanian post-communist society and the competing visions that have aimed to develop some of its fundamental institutions. Non-governmental organizations are and will be, in various ways, playing a role in the transformation of the beleaguered relationship between the state and civil society. They are also a relay mechanism for promoting alternative visions for *the good society*, within the framework of a consensus about the procedures in which this conversation will be conducted-the contemporary democratic regime. This would be a liberal ideal which has been associated with the development of civil society at the end of the last century. In these final paragraphs we briefly return to this ideal and consider other structural factors-of which principally funding- that have had a bearing on the NGO sector. The main concern for this paper remained, however, the relationship between non-profits and their sponsors and the influence this may have had on horizontal partnerships in the sector.

Firstly, project portfolios were essential for the financial security of the NGOs in our sample, and this more so as the funding market was being gradually consolidated. Such developments put a great strain on the ethical purpose of these organizations, expressed in their mission, and were ultimately a disincentive to horizontal, *genuine*, partnerships. This meant that mission statements were generally broad, aiming to cover much of the interests of donor organizations and be in line with their priorities.

The respondents to our questionnaire believed that cooperation based solely on a requirement by donors was not popular among NGOs which preferred to associate with peers who had similar missions and objectives. They would do so, perceivably, drawing on their own assessments and needs rather than just heed to donor requirements. In

any case, several nuances should qualify this inference. Firstly, NGOs would generally consider horizontal partnerships opportune when designing a project. Project based partnerships developed to a different extent based on evaluations of institutional capacity and implementation context on the one hand and formal requirements to set up partnerships, i.e. funding constraints. Secondly, even if partnerships were instrumental rather than built on a long-term vision, also for the overall development of the sector, NGOs were likely to choose their partners based on their own preferences and needs. That meant that even if the reason for establishing partnerships rested with the need to comply with funding criteria and other prerequisites for submitting an application, non-profits had the leeway to decide what specific organization to cooperate with. Indeed, this may be the main explanation why the representatives of the NGOs in our sample believed that their decision what NFPO to work together with was not constrained by their funders. However, their interpretation may have been circumscribed by their appropriation of the categories and liberal discourse of their donors, on the one hand, and the absence of any indication in the application form of what organization to collaborate with. Ultimately, the biggest threat in this line of reasoning may have been the limitation it could bring on partnerships and how widely they would spread within the sector; and consequently the added marginalization this process would bring to less significant actors. This would have been a noticeable limitation for the sector as its existence and functioning were not grounded just on evolutionary market rules but encompassed a wide moral dimension.

NGOs cooperated in different events, participated in debates regarding the sector, exchanged information and know how, supported each other and shared their expertise. They were ready to cooperate with organizations that were

involved in specific activities and had well-defined missions. To that extent, partnerships were established between organizations that had common interests and concerns. We observed, however, that organizations tended to have broad mission statements which were discussed elsewhere as a possible encumbrance to cooperation. Furthermore, even if organizations would find the common ground on which to work together, be it their mission, their institutional capacity, or their network with public authorities, or local constituencies, partnerships were created for an upward accountability to funders. Finally, as far as trust was concerned, we learned that, for donors, it was very important to be able to trust NGOs when they considered funding their applications and in the later stages of implementation and evaluation. In contrast to that, the extent to which NGOs were trustful of their sponsors seemed less important for a functional relationship.

This last finding seemed problematic for a constructive relationship based on feedback and learning both non-profits and their sponsors were eager to have and show. To this was also added the lack of trust between organizations, to which our survey respondents alluded. This we contrasted with all that we had thus far learned about establishing partnerships and we conjectured that structural changes in NGO funding coupled with a readiness to assess the general performance of the sector, by means of perhaps setting up a network within the sector, specifically concerned with this issue, could have a positive impact on the future development of the sector. An independent and transparent horizontal network for knowledge and skills transfer which would bank on new structural opportunities associated with E.U. accession may be one development we believe would be of benefit to the entire sector. The state, both at the central, local and intermediary levels could contribute to this outcome.

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THE EUROPEAN CITIZEN'S INITIATIVE: A NEW DEMOCRATIC TOOL FOR ROMANIAN NGOS?

Zsolt MOLNÁR

The European Citizen's Initiative (ECI) is a milestone in the European Union's democratic process. It brings European citizens the possibility to influence high-level European decision making through their direct involvement in the legislative process. As such, it can be considered a great step towards Europe's future, a milestone of the European democratic model. As a member of the European Union, Romania will be compelled to implement the provisions of the ECI, thus Romanian NGOs gain new means in practicing their democratic role.

There are several requirements that have to be met in the case of the ECI. By examining the related characteristics of the Romanian NGO sector with regard to international cooperation and public participation in policy making, a sense of the sector's compatibility with the requirements will arise. Associative tendencies within the sector, experience dealing with public administration, knowledge of EU matters all contribute to its efficiency in this field. These evaluations reveal potential risks that the sector faces in this respect, ranging from financing issues to thematic constraints.

The ECI, however, possesses great potential to bring development into the sector. Romanian NGOs can benefit on several levels through the import of European practices and know-how, and this fact can be an incentive for the

entire sector to better itself. This momentum, in turn, can have beneficial effects on the NGOs' environment as well.

The European Citizen's Initiative

With the coming into force of the Lisbon Treaty on the 1ˢᵗ of December 2009, the European Union has gained a new perspective on democracy and civic participation through the introduction of the European Citizen's Initiative. This method of enabling citizens to take part in the EU decision making process comes as a means to counteract the democracy deficit the EU has been accused of. Based on provision made by the Treaty on European Union modified by the above mentioned Lisbon Treaty "not less than one million citizens who are nationals of a significant number of Member States may take the initiative of inviting the Commission, within the framework of its powers, to submit any appropriate proposal on matters where citizens consider that a legal act of the Union is required for the purpose of implementing the Treaties"[1]. Thus, a new possibility arises for EU citizens to make their voices heard and influence policy making at the highest level.

According to current regulations, the European Commission (EC) was charged with the development of the rules and procedures of implementing the ECI. In preparing the EU regulations on the subject, the EC also carried out a public consultation in order to obtain opinions from key actors in the field such as citizens, civil society and

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1   The legal basis of the citizens' initiative is set out in Article 11, Paragraph 4 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU) and Article 24, paragraph 1 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU). Both were last amended as the Treaty of Lisbon. The practical arrangements, conditions and procedure of the citizens' initiative will be determined in a new EU regulation. The European Commission adopted a draft regulation on the citizens' initiative March 31st 2010.

stakeholders across the EU. This resulted in a Green Paper on the European Citizen's Initiative that sheds light on the public opinion regarding the subject. According to this Green Book, the ECI "will add a new dimension to European democracy, complement the set of rights related to the citizenship of the Union and increase the public debate around European politics, helping to build a genuine European public space". The recommendations of the Paper were later incorporated into the EC's Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Citizens' Initiative that serves as the legal basis of the ECI.

The Lisbon Treaty also introduces the Ordinary legislative procedure as a replacement for the former Codecision Procedure[2], raising the European Parliament (EP) to equal status in the EU decision making process. Thus, the EP gained decisional powers in nearly all areas of policy making, so the ECI also fell under its jurisdiction. According to procedure, the EP conducted its first reading of the Proposal and discussed it on several occasions in its committees, with the final on the modifications proposed by its members taking place on the 15th of December 2010 at the plenary session of the EP in Strasbourg, France. Based on consultations with stakeholders and the findings of the public consultation, the EP brought significant changes to the ECI in the fields of accessibility and transparency. These amendments are also a result of a compromise between the European Parliament and the Council, so the text of the Regulation is considered to be final, due to be put into practice in member states within one year from its publication in the Official Journal of the European Union. As a measure of the ECI's importance in the European Union, it is important to mention that several initiatives have been started even before the legislative bodies made their final decision[3].

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2   Article 294 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union

3   E.g.: http://www.free-sunday.eu/en/content/landingpage

The Romanian NGO sector – International cooperation and public participation in policy making

In order to be able to ascertain the feasibility of the ECI in Romania, we have to assess the Romanian NGO sector with regard to public participation in policy making and the incline towards national and international cooperation. These two dimensions of the civic sector define the ability and willingness of Romanian NGOs to participate in international actions and describe the sector's situation and possibilities in the field of influencing the actions of the government.

The most recent analysis of the sector was done in 2010 by the Civil Society Development Foundation (FDSC) under the title "Romania 2010. Non-governmental sector- profile, tendencies, challenges". This survey describes several dimensions of the associative sector in Romania and offers in-depth analysis of the phenomenon[4].

According to FDSC's findings, the total of 62680 non-governmental organizations registered in Romania offer the country a fairly high associative index (one NGO for every 346 citizens). Also, the study finds that the sector has been in a constant state of growth since the fall of the communist regime in Romania, although fluctuations in the number of newly registered NGOs have been detected over the last few years. Overall, the NGO sector in Romania is fairly young, but has been developing over the years.

The study also shows that Romanian NGOs have a low level of interconnectivity, less than one fifth of them are members of a national federation or network. In the case of international relations, even fewer (around 10%) NGOs part of any international structure. Romania's accession into the European Union brought forth a new form of NGO partnership, namely the establishment of two national platforms

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4   All statistical considerations that follow are based upon this study. All other references will be duly marked.

centered on major issues addressed by NGOs in Romania: international development and social inclusion. These are members of their thematic European federations or networks and contribute to the process of the European social dialogue. This low level of "sociability" is explained through the difficulty of Romanian NGOs in finding financing to pay for their membership, as well as a low level of trust in large organizations due to the vivid memories of the communist past. But cooperation is not entirely missing from the Romanian NGO sector, in recent years several thematic joint actions have been undertaken. Perhaps the most visible case has been the strong reaction of Romanian and international NGOs to the plans of mining for gold in Roşia Montana for the last couple of years. More recently, over 300 organizations signed an open letter to the government protesting against changes made the Romanian Fiscal Code. These precedents can become a fertile soil for the future European initiatives.

As for the public participation in policy making in Romania, a study from 2006 presented the findings in the field. The study declares that citizen's – and NGO's – involvement in the policy making process in only being done at a consultative and informative basis without any signs of real public participation, thus there is a need for a change in the attitude of the public administration[5].

The FSDC study shows that the legal framework for public participation has been developing since the year 2000 with the modification of the Romanian Constitution in 2003[6] and the coming into force of two laws regarding transparency and NGO participation in the process.[7] According to the

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5   Mihaela Lambru, Există participare publică în România, Centrul de Resurse pentru Participare Publică – CeRe, Bucureşti, 2006

6   Article 74 of the Constitution provides for public legislative initiatives.

7   Law Nr. 544/2001 and Law nr. 52/2003.

findings, one third of Romanian NGO's have used the provision of these laws, either requesting public information or submitting observations to laws put on public debate. While there was a tendency of development in this field between 2003 and 2007 through the increasing number of observations submitted by NGO's, a decline can be sensed since 2008. Taking into consideration the unfavorable administrative culture in Romania and the fact that many of the laws adopted before 2007 served the purpose of fulfilling the EU accession criteria, a plausible explanation for this tendency is that Romania administration has backed down from its commitment to social dialogue and has not been applying the two laws to their full extent.

Although there is a rather inhospitable environment in the Romanian public administration for NGOs, many of them feel they've contributed to the country's accession to the EU through advocacy and public participation mechanisms with the aim of the hastened adoption of the acquis communautaire at the national level. There is also a high level of euro-enthusiasm among NGO leaders in Romania, despite the fact that Romania's accession into the EU changes the funding system for the NGOs and poses a potential risk in this respect. But it seems that the sector is quickly learning to "play by the new rules", as 30% of Romanian applicants to the European Social Fund were NGOs.

Even under such conditions, several initiatives to collect signatures have been undertaken by Romanian NGOs in the past decade. Asociaţia Pro Democraţia has collected almost 200.000 signatures in its campaigns to change the Romanian election system between 2002 and 2004 with the aid of several partners from across the country. A more recent example is that of the nation-wide effort on behalf of elderly citizens to change the national pension system. At a local level, many initiatives are undertaken to solve local issues such ranging from situation of medical facilities to

proper delimitation of bicycle roads. The number of such actions has multiplied with the spreading of the availability of on-line resources; several initiatives are conducted on the internet. On the other hand, collecting signatures in support of a cause has become a widely used tool for political actors – usually those in opposition – in order to support their political goals, consolidate political support and attack political adversaries. This aspect may cast a shadow on the process itself and the possibility arises that the public will reject an initiative of an NGO due to the similarity of the method and the highly negative public opinion about politics it might be associated with.

To sum up, it is clear that the Romanian NGO sector faces a hostile environment at home from the point of view of public participation in the legislative process. The cultural deficit of Romanian public administration leads to a democracy deficit of the system that has been gradually moving away from public consultations ever since the country's accession to the EU in 2007. On the other hand, Romanian NGOs seem eager to use the new democratic mechanisms available since then, but lack the necessary know-how to be able to fully play their role. Also, international relations are not a strong point of the sector, although some attempts have been made to integrate the Romanian NGO sector's needs and interests into European and international structures.

Regulations of the European Citizen's Initiative and issues of compatibility for Romanian NGOs

The European Commission's Regulation as amended by the European Parliament sets the rules for the implementation of the ECI and lists the criteria for eligibility, transparency and accountability. These rules also define the possibilities of NGO with regard to the ECI and also herald some of the difficulties these organizations will face during the process or collecting and validating signatures, submission of the

initiative to the Commission and so forth. Several of the requirements are statutory in the sense that they derive from the institution of citizenship of the EU, as well as bureaucratic, meaning that several formal provisions must be respected. Beyond these formal requirements, that theoretically shouldn't pose any problems to any NGO in the EU, some provisions of the Regulation can be considered more difficult to fulfill from the point of view of Romanian NGOs.

With regard to those said in the previous chapter, three issues arise, as potential threats. The first is the number of signatures needed per member state in order for the initiative to be valid and accepted by the EC. Although the European Parliament has decreased the necessary number of states of origin of the signatures, it has also defined the minimal number of signatures a member state needs to provide in order to qualify for the support of an initiative. For the sake of objectivity, this number is linked to the number of MEPs a country sends to the EP, multiplied by 750. This result, in the case of Romania, is 24750[8]. Taking into consideration that at least seven member states need to participate in the proposal of an initiative, it is easy to calculate that no seven member stated can provide the one million signatures if each collects only the minimal number[9]. Thus, it is likely, that further efforts would be required of the participating countries' NGOs. Even though Romania has a fairly high associative index and the organizers have one year to collect the necessary signatures, Romanian NGOs or NGO networks could have difficulties in sustaining the effort needed to

8   Almost as much as it would be needed to found a political party in Romania.

9   The highest possible sum of the minimal number of signatures per participating member state is 298.500, while total sum of all the minimal number of signatures is 552.000.

fulfill the necessary targets. The Regulation does, however, facilitate ease-of-access to the tools for collecting statements of support through providing a clear model for the statements of support and open-source on-line software for collecting them. The latter may prove to be very useful for Romanian NGOs taking into consideration that the number of on-line petitions has been increasing in Romania over the last years.

On the other hand, the collection of statements of support will be done on the basis of the EC's Regulation. In legal terms this implies that the provisions of the Regulation are directly binding for member states that have one year to devise national laws to implement the ECI. In light of past experience regarding the the Romanian legislators and their attitudes towards public participation, there are reasons to worry about the bureaucratic obstacles an ECI might face in Romania. These kind of shortcomings have been noticed at a European level as well, where the Campaign for a citizen-friendly European Citizens' Initiative, a more than 120 strong European NGO coalition dedicated to the subject, has declared that "using the rules approved today, it will be impossible for truly grassroots, volunteer-run citizens' campaigns to gather 1 million signatures in 12 months" in its press release following the EP's decision[10].

The second main concern regarding the ECI is the content of the initiatives. The Regulation clearly states that one of the conditions for the acceptance of an initiative is that "the proposed citizens' initiative does not manifestly fall outside the framework of the Commission's powers to submit a proposal for a legal act of the Union for the purpose of implementing the Treaties". This means that the initiators need to fully comprehend the powers of the EC and the issues it can handle. This knowledge is crucial in order to efficiently identify the subject of the initiative, its scope

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10 http://www.citizens-initiative.eu/?p=646

and implications. Unfortunately, Romania – like most of Europe – is faced with a fairly high level of indifference of its citizens towards EU matters. This low level of awareness can be transposed to the NGO sector, although some progress should be noticeable due to the currently available EU funding system. Nevertheless, the issue remains: should an initiative be registered without the proper background knowledge, several negative consequences may arise on financial, administrative and reputational levels. So, even if the content of the initiative would be acceptable, organizers have lots more to do in order to see their initiative pass through the European legislative system.

It is foreseeable that knowledge of EU terminology and bureaucratic logic does not need to be equally spread over all the NGOs taking part in collecting the statements of support, high concentration of know-how in a limited number of highly specialized NGOs will counteract this effect. Also, a general rise in the level of EU knowledge on behalf of NGOs is likely to occur over a period of time. Regardless of the methods initiators will eventually use in formulating their ECI, the issue of "packaging" any subject into EU-compatible discourse still remains. This also bares potential risks that could damage the chances success. Such risks may include confusion within the general public due to inconsistencies between advertisement slogans and the actual text of the initiative, "weakening" of the initiative due to self-censorship that could lead to a decrease in public support, displacement of the subject due to external influences and the possibility of political retaliation.

Financing issues constitute the third main problem regarding Romanian NGOs' participation in the ECI process. It has been made clear by EU officials from the beginning that no EU funding would be made available for the ECI, thus none is provided for in the Regulation, nor will the EU funding system be modified in order to accommodate

funding for Initiatives. The organizers have to provide own funding for their undertaking or apply from funding to non-EU sources. While the latter has some probability of being a viable solution[11], major financial efforts will be necessary on behalf of the initiators. Although the overall revenues of the Romanian NGO sector has increased over the past years, two thirds of them have small or very small incomes, with 82,11% of the total income of the sector being derived by just 7,46% of all the organizations. This unequal distribution of revenue leads to the conclusion that few Romanian NGOs are capable of carry through an initiative. While the EP has provided for a relatively cheap method of collecting signatures through open-source software, several highly costly requirements still remain, such as translation obligations, promotion and storage costs etc. Also, the Regulation states that "the organizers shall be given the opportunity to present the citizens' initiative at a public hearing". Even though it is not compulsory and EU institutions are compelled to provide the venue for the hearing, politically realistic organizers cannot neglect this opportunity if they are intent on seeing their initiative go through. All these factors contribute to the identification of the financial aspect of the ECI as a major problem for Romanian NGOs. The European NGO sector's willingness to undertake an initiative will no doubt lead to creation of viable continental funding systems with mechanisms of financial aid for the participants lacking own means of financing this activity. This solution, be it satisfactory from a financial point of view, may have negative effects on the ability of those being financed to enforce their local or national interest.

An administrative issue also presents itself. According to the Regulation, each member state is to designate a

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11 It is likely that lobby or advocacy groups will support some initiatives complementary to their specific interest.

national authority charged with parts of the implementation of the ECI on a national level, including certification of a registered initiative, as well as verification and certification of statements of support collected. In knowledge of the characteristics of Romania's public administration, it can be foreseen, that setbacks may occur due to this issues.

Conclusion

Based upon these considerations it can be concluded that, although the European Citizen's Initiative is a step forward in the development of the European democracy and legislators have intended to design it to be easily accessible, the Romanian NGO sector is going to face several difficulties with regard to the Initiative. Several structural flaws of the sector show that the Romanian NGOs have to make considerable effort in order to be eligible to take part or initiate a European Citizen's Initiative. On the other hand, the Romanian NGO sector's environment has not been supportive of the sector's involvement in policy making, thus the necessary cultural, theoretical and practical background is lacking. One solution would be for large, financially stable Romanian NGOs to spearhead such activities, but risks also lie in this top-to-bottom approach. The Romanian NGO sector has not reached a state of maturity and does not possess the necessary international connections that would allow it to be an independent actor in the ECI process. However, the ECI bears within it the potential to induce development. Thematic partnerships are already an active part of the Romanian NGO sector and the ECI can spur NGO cooperation along these lines by providing additional motivation for cooperation, both at the national and the international level. Also, participating in the Initiatives, Romanian NGOs have the opportunity to learn about EU institutional culture, thus enhancing their ability to better position their activities. This, corroborated

with the possibility to learn more about the EU funding system, could lead to a better rate of accessing these sources.

Perhaps the most important effect the ECI will have on Romanian NGOs is the realization that, contrary to home experiences, the civic sector can have a decisive impact on the legislative process. Successful initiatives will prove that public opinion can be voiced and endorsed, which will act as a powerful motivational factor for the sector to initiate and support involvement on all levels. By acting on a higher legislative level, Romanian NGOs could even manage to counteract the disregarding attitude of its national legislators. In time, persistent initiatives on behalf of NGOs could even lead to a softening of the resistance in this field. Such developments, in turn, can have positive effects on the chances of the civic society to influence democratic governance.

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THIS IS NOT THE BEGINNING OF A BEAUTIFUL FRIENDSHIP! CIVIL SOCIETY AND ELECTIONS

Aurelian MUNTEAN, Andrei GHEORGHIŢĂ[1]

Twenty five years ago civil society began to attract the spotlights of international and regional (from Eastern Europe) specialists and governments. It was more and more clear that civil society has the capacity to promote interests and ideas different from the official ones in totalitarian or autocratic regimes. Eastern Europe was about to experiment how movements generated and organized by civil society organizations (trade unions and churches) are dynamically generating the regime change (Elster, Offe and Preuss 1998; Howard 2003; Tilly 2004).

Civil society is a widely used concept not only in political science but also in politicians' discourses and media analyses. During the transition civil society was considered almost a panacea for the consolidation of democracy. Although the concept of civil society is very used, its meanings are not always clearly specified. In this chapter we consider civil society as the realm of groups different from political parties, made of individuals having at a certain moment at least one common interest, aiming to influence politics, and obeying their actions to the legal framework. Thus, civil society embraces organizations like trade unions, religious organizations – including churches, political interest groups other than parties, civil rights NGOs. Often, in a very restrictive approach, usually endorsed by international assistance for the development of democracy, civil society is limited especially or even only to the civic advocacy NGOs (Carothers 1996: 65).

One of the features of civil society is constituted by the space where individuals and institutions representing their interests have the opportunity to develop the basis of different powers: power to influence the outcomes of policy-making process, power to legitimate collective actions in relations with the executive, power to demand a specific direction for the official decisions or the power to threat state's officials and to determine the adoption of certain measures (Dryzek 1996: 481-482). It is hard to believe that in a democratic regime the state (its official, empowered institutions) can be threatened so easily by civil society institutions. In fact a sounder explanation would be the capacity of bargaining that is shared by state institutions and civil society organizations. This partnership between state and civil society might be seen as a social "checks and balances" between the rulers and the ruled.

Which are the limits of civil society, concerning the component organizations? To answer to this question

one must see what kinds of institutions are commonly considered as being part of the civil society. Diamond (1999) adopted an inclusive view. He argued that civil society comprises institutions from areas such as: economic, cultural, informational and educational, interest developmental, issue-oriented and civic. Civil society has specific features that particularize it from other arenas of society. It is different from the parochial society that Diamond sees as being concerned only with private aims, not public ones. It does not try to share the political power inside the state but to influence it. Further, civil society is seen as being based on plurality and diversity of actions inside the framework of social life. Moreover, it does not monopolize the representation of interests in favor of a single organization, but represents them through a multitude of associations, groups and organizations. At the same time, civil society's component institutions tend to be specialized in representation of certain groups and interests (Almond et al. 2003).

In this chapter we will focus on two categories of civil society organizations, civic advocacy organizations and trade unions, since they were the most active types of NGOs during elections. However, their activity had different aims and means to achieve them. Civic advocacy organizations joined a coalition and concentrated on 'cleaning' the party lists from 'Dalmatians' - spotted candidates evaluated by civil society organizations to be unfit for being elected in the Parliament. Trade unions (part of them) aimed to pursue their interests directly in Parliament by promoting union leaders on party lists. In the next parts of the paper we will analyze both strategies in order to unveil the outcomes.

Our paper focuses on the role played by civil society organizations in the 2004 general elections. This electoral context was defined by a particularly active involvement of

non-party actors in the electoral race on multiple directions. Such a peak in civil society involvement din not replicate in later electoral competitions of 2008 and 2009, that were dominated by a highly polarized competition, personal attacks and scandals and low degree of salient policy proposals, ideological disputes and civic actions originated in the civil society. According to Muntean, Pop-Elecheş and Popescu (2010: 754) other civic actions were preferred by NGOs in 2008 and 2009, like "citizen mobilization, media monitoring and promotion of substantive politics and issues".[2]

Civil society in Romania:
social relevance and future development

Since 1989, the point of regime change and starting of democratization process, Romania organized five simultaneous general and presidential elections. Foreign and domestic civil society organizations were involved in monitoring elections since 1990 (see also Carothers 1996: 45). During every election process the opinions of election monitoring NGOs about the fairness of the process were highly debated in mass media.

Civil society continuously matured after 1989, although it is far from reaching the level of civic involvement, organization and activities that characterize the western civil societies (Howard 2003: ch. 4). The voice of NGOs began to be more powerful and the politicians started to take the NGOs more seriously (Carothers 1996: 68). There is agreement on the total number of active civil society organizations, how

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2   One of the most eloquent directions of this civic action was the Vote Advice Application of Median Research Centre, developed on www.testvot.eu, allowing Romanian electors to better inform on the issues of elections and electoral party manifestoes and to compare their policy stances on different salient issues in society with the stances of parties on the same problems.

many were registered during a specific period of time and the number of organizations that disappeared in the same period. At the time of 2004 general elections there were two partial evaluations of the overall number of civil society NGOs in databases of two resource NGOs: Civil Society Development Foundation (FDSC) and CENTRAS. FDSC collected information about organizations starting with the year 2000, using voluntary self filling questionnaires. According to CENTRAS database there in 2004 there were 1773 active NGOs. 118 were active within the primary or secondary field of advocacy while 194 were registered within the primary or secondary field of civil rights protection. About 12-14% of the total number of NGOs had as primary domain of activity the civil rights protection and advocacy. The FDSC database included a total number of 4190 active NGOs in 2004. Out of it, 483 NGOs were active in the field of civil rights and civic education, which represented 11.5% of the total.

A more recent study of FDSC, released in 2010, has updated the statistics of NGOs in Romania. According to the methodology used in this study (FDSC 2010: 21-26) the total number of registered NGOs in 2010 was 62680. The estimated number of active NGOs in 2008 was 21319, counted as the total number of NGOs that has submitted the compulsory annual financial report to the local fiscal authorities. Compared to the other two methodologies, based on voluntary self-filling questionnaires, previously used in counting the number of NGOs, the methodology used in 2010 by FDSC is different. It is based on public authorities' official records of NGOs. Although this new methodology might be more reliable since it is using the official registration of the organizations and the frequency of financial reports submitted by NGOs, it might not necessarily offer a finer differentiation of active and non-active organizations. However, given the different methodologies the numbers from the FDSC studies in 2004 and 2008 are not comparable.

The pool to offer civic advocacy organizations that might get involved in activities like election monitoring, public awareness or anti-corruption campaigns represents roughly 11-12% of the total number of civil society organizations. Of course, only a small part of this percent is active and finally gets involved in such activities, making it harder to develop powerful monitoring NGOs.

Civil society has benefited from large financial, logistic, human and organizational assistance from international donors like USAID, IRI, NDI, NED, PHARE-EU, The German Marshall Fund, UNDP, Soros Foundation or IFES. Without their important assistance the activity of civic advocacy organizations might have been endangered or even inexistent. The effects of international assistance for civic advocacy NGOs were beneficial in terms of training and technical assistance for NGOs, but also in terms of development of new attitudes and opinions inside the society. Politicians and public authorities started "to give more consideration to certain basic rights such as free speech and due process, and to recognize publicly that oppositional politics and human rights advocacy are not the same" (Carothers 1996: 68-69). Nonetheless, as Thomas Carothers underlines (1996: 69-70) the general impact of civic advocacy groups on public awareness and democratic civic consciousness is limited to the urban, educated, and political power-related groups.

The lack of alternative domestic financial assistance makes it very difficult for civic advocacy groups to develop organically and to secure a relative financial independence. Therefore, human and financial consuming campaigns as the Coalition for a Clean Parliament in 2004 would have been impossible to exist in their full extension without the international assistance. Even though the partners of the Coalition have different fields of activity (civic awareness, think tank, media monitoring, human rights protection, student organization, journalism), thus increasing the expectation to be able to access different financial resources

through grants, it is obvious that the limited number of donors for advocacy campaigns reduces very much the fund-raising field.

Civic advocacy groups are often based on voluntary activity of the mass of members. Instead, in Romania voluntary activity in this sort of organizations is very scarce. Recent analyses (Bădescu 2003; Voicu 2005) and opinion polls show that Romanians are not highly participative in voluntary associations. This is not the case that Romanians are an exception compared to other Eastern Europeans. Instead Romanians place above the average membership and active participation in civil society organizations (Howard 2003: 65-66).

Table 1. Membership and active participation in civil society organizations

Membership	Public Opinion Barometer May 2005 (%)	Active participation BOP May 2005 (%)	Panel survey* November-December 2004 (%)	Active participation Panel survey* 2004 (%)
Trade unions	7.9	6.9	9.6	3.0
Religious organizations	1.2	1.0	3.6	N/A
Sport associations	0.9	0.9	1.5	0.8
NGO	1.1	0.9	1.7	1.1
Environmental groups	0.1	0.2	0.8	0.1
Condominium owners' associations	7.6	4.2	10.3	N/A
Professional associations	0.7	0.4	3.1	1.3
Church choirs	0.9	0.8	2.8	N/A

∗ The panel survey was organized by Gabriel Bădescu, Grigore Pop-Elecheş, Marina Popescu, Paul E. Sum, Aurelian Muntean, and Andrei Gheorghiţă through a joint-financing from University of Princeton, International Policy Fellowship Budapest, and Romanian National Council for Scientific Research in Higher Education (grant no. 382/2004 and doctoral scholarship 185/2003).

Table 2. Trust in civil society organizations and in public institutions

Trust very much and a lot in...	Public Opinion Barometer May 2005 (percentages)	Panel survey* November-December 2004 (percentages)
Trade unions	N/A	20.8
NGOs	28	N/A
Church	83	83
Parliament	21.7	20.1
President	45.5	37.7
Government	30.6	N/A
Army	61.6	N/A
Juridical system	24.9	28.2
Police	36	N/A
Mass media	61.3	53.9
Political parties	12.4	16.1
Mayor of the respondent's residence place	43	N/A

∗ The panel survey was organized by Gabriel Bădescu, Grigore Pop-Elecheş, Marina Popescu, Paul E. Sum, Aurelian Muntean, and Andrei Gheorghiţă through a joint-financing from University of Princeton, International Policy Fellowship Budapest, and Romanian National Council for Scientific Research in Higher Education (grant no. 382/2004 and doctoral scholarship 185/2003).

Civil society and trade unions

In order to influence state policies, citizens have to be members in "politically relevant groups" being able to influence politics in the direction of group's interests. (Lipset, Trow and Coleman 1956: 15). Trade unions, as well as other independent organizations in society increase the political socialization of their members. They serve as arenas in which new ideas are generated, networks through which citizens get acquainted with political attitudes, means for training future political leaders, means to get citizens to participate in political activities and bases of opposition to the central authority (Lipset, Trow and Coleman 1956: 80). Besides collective interests such as wages, working conditions and securing workplace, personal identification with a stance of a group and local tradition, membership in trade unions

has other causes as well. Offe and Wiesenthal (1985: 184) argued that workers tend to organize themselves in trade unions because their potential for mobilizing sanctions (the principal tool to accomplish interests) is very weak as individuals by reason of their atomization of interests. Instead, the construction of this tool inside unions is more feasible and more effective, producing win-win situations in relation with the state institutions.

The post-communist changes influenced the positioning of trade unions in society. From a "transmission belt" role during communism, they switched to class interest organization and promotion. Trade unions moved from politically captured agents to opposition vis-à-vis the political and economic interests of parties and the state. Economic reforms impacted unions' basis – the membership – and determined trade unions to identify new means for influencing political agenda, as well as to change their interest set-up strategies in order to combine the interests of leaders and members. Trade unions are organized around collective and individual social and economic interests, sometimes opposed to the interests of political actors. Their most important resource is membership. This resource is transformed into power through the capacity of mobilization. During transition trade unions manifested as very active associative organizations: strikes, petitions and demonstrations are the principal high public impact actions; while personal contact with politicians and informal bargaining are highly used back-door methods but with less impact on public opinion.

However, trade unions' power decreased during transition (Perez Diaz 1993; Ost 1993; Iankova 2002). The increase of unemployment declined the membership of trade unions. The decline was influenced also by the privatization of large parts of the economy: in private companies the workers are not encouraged to join trade unions, although the legislative framework supports association in trade unions, while the

employees do not put a strong pressure in this sense. In greenfield companies trade unions have fewer chances to organize collective action and the employees cannot joint such organizations, mainly because of the employers' reluctance towards unionization, but also due to the increasing wages in a continuous development of Romania's economy after 1999. This reluctance is partly explained by the early equilibrium between trade unions and employers' associations: in the first ten years of transition trade unions were far better organized compared to associations.

The relations of civil society organizations with the state were dominated by trade unions. The pressure that unions have put on government was higher than that used by other civil society organizations. Methods like strikes, demonstrations, picketing state institutions were of high impact in media and politicians took seriously the trade unions' pressures during bargaining. Some unions were used by various politicians as a pressure group to determine certain changes in the political *status quo*. The miners' marches towards Bucharest in the '90s (the first march took place in June 1990, the last march took place in February 1999) had a deep impact on public opinion attitudes towards trade unions. They were ever since 1990 considered less than a "civic" part of the civil society and more a "mass for political maneuvers" in political competition. The decline of trade unions in terms of power, membership, capacity to mobilize people, is not as surprising as some authors argue (Ost 1993). In fact, there are several factors that could explain this decline:

(1) Individuals had enough of pseudo-voluntary membership in trade unions, since before 1989 unions were known as being an extension to the single party, and being a union member would increase the chances to receive a larger apartment, half-priced spa's tickets and even advances on professional hierarchy – all of these benefits vanished after 1989;

(2) The changes in the economy increased uncertainty – legal, institutional, social, welfare – thus, creating a "wild" incipient capitalism, in which trade unions barely tried to adapt themselves rather than focus on collective materialistic and post-materialistic issues; while individuals had to concentrate on personal welfare and securing their owns interests rather than pursuing collective ones, in an unpredictable environment;

(3) Fragmentation of unionism, accompanied by chaotic union strategies as concerns political and economic issues, as well as internal democratization of unions and diversification of membership strategies;

(4) Emergence of different possibilities to engage in collective associations different from trade unions, like religious associations and collective actions, sport association and neighborhood or local community group initiatives;

(5) Structural incapacity of groups to identify collective common interests because of the reminiscent over-controlling and repressive/bureaucratic state as David Ost argues (1993: 456);

(6) Trade unions are regarded as "relics of the past" (Ost and Crowley 2001: 219), and "Sleeping Beauties" that lost the contact with changes in society and cannot find their place in the current state of industrial relations (Kubicek 2004: 3);

(7) Economic development decreased individual incentives for collective pursue of wealth and better jobs or employments conditions.

(8) Increasing gap between the three levels of union leaders: the national confederation, the national federation and the local union. The leaders representing the five representative national confederations, members in the Social and Economic Council have developed privileged relations with the national-level decision-making institutions and the political actors. The had the effect of decreasing the feeling of national representation of their constituents who have decided to take the representation and protest action

on their own hands in relation with the government officials (Veress 2009).

We can identify three trajectories that determine the perception of post-communist unions as being civil society organizations moreover closer to the political society than to the civil society: (1) violence as a result of social unrest and political influences determining the miners marches towards Bucharest; (2) trade unions struggle to promote their political interests either by forming their own parties – like in 1992 and 2004 elections, or by promoting union leaders on party lists (top concentration of union leaders MPs – 14 – was in 2000-2004 legislature); (3) union opposition towards economic reforms, associated with support for populist policies – these strategies were seen by civil society organizations as an Achilles' heel in relation with the government, taking into account the fact that the majority of civil society organizations promoted straightforward liberal or at least centre-moderate attitudes, while the majority if not all the major trade unions support left or centre-left policies.

Other civil society organizations like civic advocacy ones were reluctant to cooperate with trade unions in civic actions (for example in the 2004 Coalition for a Clean Parliament). Trade unions were regarded with suspicion by civic advocacy organizations labeling unions as being "sold" to government, thus cannot be trusted in advocacy campaigns pursuing responsibility of MPs. It must be underlined that in spite of these attitudes trade unions managed to cooperate with other civil society organizations in actions like promotion of an Electoral Code (project of Pro Democracy Association) or the Constitutional Forum (civil society meetings with politicians in order to discuss the project to change the Constitution in 2003). The lack of trust might be explained by the fact that trade unions co-opted in civic actions did not manage to change the general impression about their capacity to work together with civil society organizations.

It is the case of Electoral Code Project that required two hundred fifty thousands signatures from citizens to be put on the Parliament's agenda – trade unions were informally accused by the civic advocacy partners in the project not to be active enough and to mobilize their members in order to collects their signatures. Collecting only 180,000 signatures while trade unions promote the idea that they have more than 3 millions members, helps understand the frustration of their civic partners that unions did not manage (or bother) to collect signatures and take a straightforward side.

However, unions are considered to have a significant blackmail potential, as a result of their actions' reflection in media. Since the government high ranking officials pay attention to what trade unions demand "on streets" sustained by thousands of workers and backed-up by the millions of members unions pretend to represent, attaching to unions a high pressure power seems rational. Unions are typical civil society organizations that interact very often with government, while pursuing collective (union) interests. Apart from the personal contacts union leaders have with governmental officials, trade unions have a privileged position being represented in the Social and Economic Council (the other members of the council represent employers' associations and the government). No other civil society organizations (apart from employers' associations) are represented in such consultative national councils. This position gives trade unions a specific power of bargaining with the government and influencing decision-making process.

Civil society and elections

Civil society organizations do not resume to merely influencing the decision-making process through specific methods like contacting officials, drafting and promoting laws, organizing strikes, demonstrations and boycotts or signing petitions. Their interaction with the political

society is more complex and is based on historical legacies and precedents, international assistance and replication of more or less successful models of activities and strategies of behavior. Thus, apart from general activities aimed to pursue interests, like the ones mentioned above, we identify three types of interaction between civil society and political society during elections.

The first type of interaction is represented by *direct involvement in elections*, support and promotion of "anti-political politics" – mass mobilization and political representation of interests through forums and organized movements that behave like large "umbrella organizations". Ever since the beginnings of regime change in early 1989, civil society in Eastern Europe was very active in shaping the forthcoming founding elections. The interaction between civil society and political society at the electoral level impacted not only civil society's paths development during the transition, but also political parties' emergence. It is widely accepted that the civil society organizations opposing the communist regime in the '80s determined the path of regime change, institutional arrangements and even political competition. The first post-communist large political organizations in Hungary, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, and Lithuania were acting in the first instance as civic organizations interested in politics, but keeping their organization away from party discipline, office seeking and bureaucracy (Tóka 2004: 124; Elster et al. 1998: 132-140). These civic-based political organizations dominated the first free elections. Two of the reasons for the initial success of these organizations were the managing of regime change process by round table negotiations, dominated by civic opposition; and the need to organize free elections in the shortest time, which impeded political organizations to develop genuine programs and ideologies (Elster et al. 1998: 134).

Involvement of civil society in *election monitoring* programs is the second type of interaction with the political society. Election monitoring can be defined as "purposeful gathering of information about an electoral process and public assessment of that process against universal standards for democratic elections by foreign or international organizations [and domestic civil society organizations] committed to neutrality and to democratic process for the purpose of building public and international confidence about the election's integrity or documenting and exposing the ways in which the process falls short [and intervening in the electoral process to correct imperfections caused by violation and ignoring of laws and standard procedures, while making recommendations for action]" (Bjornlund 2004: 40-41).

Dating from the 1980's monitoring elections is a fairly new form of civic activity during the elections. Its impact is in the same time hardly measurable but very important for different types of elections. We can identify several types of democratic elections assessed (1) in relation to the moment they are taking place vis-à-vis the point of regime change and (2) in relation to their importance and structural effects on democracy's development. The categories of elections are: regular, transitional, postconflict and consolidating (Bjornlund 2004: 35-36). Identifying the types of elections is very important in order to asses the importance of election monitoring organizations both from the monitored (authorities) and from the monitoring (domestic and foreign EMOs) point of view. The first election monitoring was organized in the mid '80s in Africa and South America. However, the boom in these activities took place in 1990 when the founding elections took place in Eastern Europe.

Romanian domestic civil society organizations, which are the focal point of our paper, got involved in election monitoring campaigns starting with the 1992 local and general elections. Their impact was often greater than that

of international monitoring missions, due to the much higher number of observers mobilized by domestic EMOs (LADO and Pro Democracy Association) compared to the international EMOs (OSCE and US based organizations); a deeper observation of problems in polling stations; and "stirring up stronger feelings: positive and negative" about monitoring (Carothers 1996: 51).

Finally, the third type of interaction between civil society and political society is the *straightforward supporting of certain political parties* by civil society organizations, like trade unions, churches and NGOs. Trade unions develop ties with political parties because of the ideological approach and with the aim of better promoting union interests. Historically trade unions are closer to the left-wing parties, but after the Second World War some unions established close connections with centre-right parties, especially the Christian Democrats. The Catholic Church has an important ascendant upon the Christian Democratic parties. However, other denominations, especially the Orthodox Churches in Eastern European Orthodox majoritarian countries, tended to manifest as supporter of the governmental parties. This can be explained not as much as ideological and values similar orientations, but as a reminiscent strategy of supporting the state and its institutions through a "symphony" between the church and the state, dating from the communist period. There are cases when NGOs manifested as open supporters of specific candidates and political parties, as it was the case of the Coalition for Return, a Bosnian NGO that advised citizens to vote for certain candidates during the 1997 municipal elections (Chandler 2003: 232-233).

2. Civil society involvement in the 2004 elections
Data and methodology

This chapter aims at discussing the consequences of civil society organizations' involvement in the 2004 electoral competition, both at the level of the political and civil society.

Therefore, it tries to investigate the conditions that have favored a successful challenge of the main political actors by the most visible civic advocacy organizations. Additional focus is given to the evaluation of achievements and failures associated to the civil society's active involvement in the game of elections. In order to cover these research goals, we made use of both qualitative and quantitative data. On the one side, we employed data collected through a series of extensive interviews with leaders of civil society organizations involved in the electoral competition: Ioana Avădani, executive director of the Center for Independent Journalism; Adrian Sorescu, executive director of the Pro Democracy Association; Cristian Pîrvulescu, president of the Pro Democracy Association; and Cristian Ghinea, journalist at Dilema weekly journal and former expert and program coordinator at the Romanian Academic Society. On the other side, we analyzed quantitative data from the Public Opinion Barometer (POB) survey series of the Soros Foundation Romania and also from a panel survey organized in 2004 by Gabriel Bădescu, Grigore Pop-Elecheş, Marina Popescu, Paul E. Sum, Aurelian Muntean, and Andrei Gheorghiţă, through a joint-financing from Princeton University, International Policy Fellowship Budapest, and Romanian National Council for Scientific Research in Higher Education (CNCSIS)[3].

Civil society involvement in the 2004 elections.
A general framework

The 2004 general elections were dominated by the corruption issue. According to the Media Monitoring Agency, mass media generally focused on events, news, and political discourses that touched mainly the issue of political corruption. Other salient issues were the diplomatic

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3   CNCSIS research grant no. 382/2004 and doctoral scholarship 185/2003.

successes like accession to the NATO and temporary closing of the negotiation chapters for the EU accession process and the reforms in major fields like public administration, justice and economics (free competition). The governing party – Social Democratic Party (PSD) – concentrated its campaign on the diplomatic and political successes, while the opposition – mainly the Truth and Justice Alliance (DA) – focused on the corruption of PSD and the lack of reforms in major fields. During elections, the major competitors accused each other of unfair competition and illegal actions with negative impact on the fairness of elections, still without being able to provide irrefutable evidences.

At the same time, the 2004 campaign came in a much tensed general political environment, after successive accusations of freedom of speech limitation and media control against the governing Social Democratic Party (PSD). Such accusations had been expressed not only by the opposition, but also by external actors and by the civil society. In this general framework, a vigorous implication of the civil society in the electoral competition came as a must, since the long-term political development and stability of the country were severely related to the results of the elections. It was not a matter of who wins or who loses, but of *how to win*. In the following sections, we shall focus on the mechanisms of electoral involvement chosen by the Romanian civil society. In each case, we shall discuss the consequences and implications of each program both for the political society and the civil society.

Civil society as involved arbiter

The Coalition for a Clean Parliament (CCP) was probably the most complex politically-oriented initiative ever developed inside the Romanian civil society. It was designed as an anti-corruption awareness campaign, focused on the entire specter of relevant political elites competing

in parliamentary elections. On a first level, the complexity of such an initiative is easy to evaluate in numbers: ten of the most important civic NGOs[4] have continuously worked together for over one year, assuming the role of arbitrating an electoral campaign foreseen as particularly dirty. On a second level, its complexity is given by the mix of actions involved: fund-raising, investigation, negotiation, public information campaign, all in an environment of sharp political pressures.

Briefly, the Coalition for a Clean Parliament aimed to promote the idea of integrity in politics, by the means of a broad public information campaign, "Vote with your eyes wide open!". Mainly, the campaign was a matter of highlighting the candidates considered unfit for public offices because of morality reasons. In such a démarche, civil society was intended to become a public arbiter that should make the rules of political integrity in the competition for the Romanian parliament and then point to those that do not fit such rules. However, this was not an easy job, since the general political context could be easily described in terms of predatory networked elites, generalized state capture, and media ownership control.

The CCP anti-corruption awareness campaign was designed as a sequence of six steps, conceived to offer the program legitimacy, visibility, and a remarkably high blackmail potential.

(1) The first step was to set the rules of the game. As a result of an open public debate inside the civil society, six

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4   The Romanian Academic Society (SAR), The Group for Social Dialogue (GDS), The Association of Political Science Students (APSS), Association for the Defence of Human Rights in Romania – Helsinki Committee (APADOR-CH), Pro Democracy Association (APD), Freedom House Romania, Center for Independent Journalism (CJI), Civic Alliance (AC), Media Monitoring Agency (MMA), and Open Society Foundation (OSF).

individual criteria that would make a candidate unfit for "a clean Parliament" emerged: (a) having repeatedly shifted from one political party to another in search of personal profit; (b) having been accused of corruption on the basis of published and verifiable evidence; (c) having been revealed as an agent of the Securitate; (d) being the owner of a private firm with important arrears to the state budget; (e) being unable to account for the discrepancy between one's officially stated assets and his/her income; and (f) turning a profit from conflicts of interest involving one's public position (Mungiu-Pippidi 2005: 7).

(2) Once the rules set, they needed a formal legitimacy from the main actors involved. Here came a series of discussions with the leadership of the parties represented in the parliament. The result has been the expected one, since the most important political parties publicly agreed with the criteria of the CCP and announced their support for the initiative – we should mention here the governing Social Democratic Party (PSD), the Humanist Party (PUR), electoral ally of PSD, the opposition National Liberal Party (PNL) and Democratic Party (PD),[5] and finally the Democratic Union of Hungarians from Romania (UDMR). CCP's offer was rejected by the radical Greater Romania Party (PRM), the second important party in terms of parliamentary representation, but only a marginal competitor in the 2004 elections.

(3) The third step was to gather information about the candidates of the six main parties. The task of investigation at local level was assumed by one local journalist of investigation for each county, double-checked by a staff member of a local NGO branch and a senior journalist with responsibilities at regional level. The names of the investigators and reviewers

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5   The National Liberal Party (PNL) and the Democratic Party (PD) were the constituents of the electoral alliance called Justice and Truth (DA).

remained anonymous, even for the organizations making part of the coalition. At this level, the result was a series of four 'black lists' with the names of the candidates considered unfit to hold a seat in the future parliament, because of meeting one or more criteria. The four lists corresponded to the two main electoral blocks – PSD+PUR National Union and PNL-PD Justice and Truth Alliance (DA) – and to the two remaining parties represented in parliament, Democratic Union of Hungarians from Romania (UDMR) and Greater Romania Party (PRM).

(4) The fourth step was to send the resulting 'black lists' to the corresponding political parties. It is the first point where the civil society makes use of its blackmail potential over the political society. Parties were demanded to examine the case of each candidate and to decide whether to maintain or eliminate the candidates in question. The proposed exchange is clear: withdraw them or their 'sins' will go public once more.[6] CPC clearly and publicly stated its availability for re-analysing any cases where individual candidates contested its findings (Mungiu-Pippidi 2005: 8).

(5) The next step was mainly a non-step for the CPC, since it assumed only a passive role. It was a period left for the political parties to re-analyze their initial candidates, having only three available options: withdraw, maintain or appeal to CPC. For a short period, the civil society dominated the pre-electoral scene, turning itself into some kind of a commission of discipline for the main political actors. Parties seemed unable or unwilling to react other way than conforming to the pressure from the civil society, and any form of appeal or contestation only came from individual candidates. PSD+PUR National Union withdrew about 30

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6   The listed information brought nothing new, since CPC's accusations had been extracted from press materials published over the years or public sources of various state authorities.

candidates out of 143 from its electoral lists, some appeals from the candidates were accepted, and so the final count of PSD+PUR Dalmatians[7] was 95. DA Alliance withdrew 18 of 28 unfit candidates, and PRM and UDMR none (Mungiu-Pippidi 2005: 8) (Table 3).

Table 3. Initial black lists and final black lists of the CPC

Party / Alliance	Initial list count	Final list count
PSD+PUR National Union	143	95
PNL-PD Justice and Truth (DA) Alliance	28	10
Greater Romania Party (PRM)	46	46
Democratic Union of Hungarians (UDMR)	3	3

(6) The last step in the activity of CPC was to print and distribute the final black lists (containing exclusively the names of the remaining 'spotted' candidates) in the form of 1.6 million leaflets in most of the 41 counties of Romania. It's been an enormous information campaign that involved more than 2,000 volunteers. The real dimensions of this campaign are obvious if we think that daily print press readership in Romania was around 20% in the end of 2004, according to Soros Foundation's Public Opinion Barometer (Table 4a and 4b).

Table 4a. Newspaper readership in Romania

On the average, how often do you read newspapers?	Daily	Several times a week	Several times a month	Monthly or rarer	Never
October 2004 Public Opinion Barometer	20.8%	20.9%	14.5%	12.8%	31.1%
May 2005 Public Opinion Barometer	19.3%	20.0%	14.4%	14.5%	31.9%

Source: *Soros Foundation Public Opinion Barometer, October 2004 and May 2005*.

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7   The term 'Dalmatian' has been commonly used for the 'spotted' candidates that did not pass the CPC's test of moral integrity.

Table 4b. Newspaper readership in Romania
(top three national newspapers)

On the average, how often do you read political news in ...	At least once per week	Rarely	Not at all
Adevărul	10.1%	18.8%	68.9%
Evenimentul Zilei	9.3%	18.8%	69.6%
Libertatea	20.1%	11.3%	62.5%

Source: *November 2005 wave of the panel survey organized by Gabriel Bădescu, Grigore Pop-Elecheş, Marina Popescu, Paul E. Sum, Aurelian Muntean, and Andrei Gheorghiţă.*

Briefly, this has been the schedule of actions put into practice by the Coalition for a Clean Parliament. Though up to this level the succession of activities has already shown a remarkable and rather unique strategic effort from the civil society, there is a strong need to perceive this effort in the complex system of interactions with the other actors involved in the electoral campaign, namely the political parties/candidates and the media.

Relationship with political parties

We have a self-nominated arbiter, namely a significant part of the civil society. But who are the players? We should distinguish between parties as strategic players and candidates as contextual players. A clear bi-directional relation between CCP and the main parties is easily identifiable in four moments of the "Vote with your eyes wide open!" campaign.

Firstly, there was a moment of quasi-general agreement, with the occasion of CCP's *step two*. Seeking for a formal legitimacy, the actors from the civil society asked for a feedback from the political actors on the list of criteria employed. Of course, such a broad legitimacy was easy to receive at that very moment, since it wouldn't have been a good signal for a party to reject the desirable goal of having

a moral political elite. At the same time, at that moment, the capacity of the civil society to put into practice such an ambitious program was really questionable. The result was that most political parties transmitted public statements of support for the CPC initiative, with the notable exception of the Greater Romania Party (PRM). No clear reaction is identifiable from the part of individual candidates, no matter their political origins.

The second phase comes when main political parties were asked to withdraw from their lists the spotted candidates (CCP's *step five*). At this level, different patterns of reaction are distinguishable. The Truth and Justice (DA) Alliance had a particularly favorable behavior. It was a normal strategic option for two opposition parties, openly claiming not to be involved within the corrupt networks of power. Further, it was obvious for both party leaders that in any comparison the DA Alliance would score much better in terms of black-listed candidates than the government party. There was also a second reason for one of the parties (PD) to agree and support CCP's initiative – the cleaning campaign was a perfect opportunity to force several internal opponents to do 'the step back' and, hence, to refresh the party's top leadership.

In this second phase, the National Union PSD+PUR reacted very incoherently. The first reaction was to announce the exclusion from the lists of a certain number of candidates and the self-withdrawal of others for 'personal reasons'. A few days later, a significant change in the Union's strategy occurred, exactly one month before the parliamentary elections. This change took the shape of an aggressive campaign against the CCP's initiative mass media. CCP was accused of being part of a larger conspiracy of the opposition and also of intending to violate the fundamental political right of a citizen to be elected. The Union's candidates were publicly encouraged to sue the authors of the 'black lists' and to ask the courts to ban the distribution of the CCP's leaflets.

The Democratic Union of Hungarians from Romania (UDMR) invoked its particular status of ethnic political party in demanding to be exempted from the CCP's procedures, but with no result. No candidate was dropped out from the lists by UDMR. The Greater Romania Party (PRM) continued to ignore all the inputs from the CCP.

Reactions from individual candidates are a particularly interesting aspect that deserves to be emphasized in this second phase. Typical patterns of behavior related to:

a) Appeals, contestations, justifications, having as a unique goal the drop out from the black lists;

b) Public appeal in justice for defamation or contestation of CPC's initiative legal character – there are several visible cases, all coming from National Union PSD+PUR candidates: a former head of a secret service, a former minister of justice, a former minister of defense, the president of the Senate etc.;

c) Different pressures against the senior staff of the Coalition;

d) Frequent cases of intra-party denouncements in an attempt to eliminate candidates better placed on the party lists.

The third phase in the CCP-parties relationship is related to the national information campaign, by the means of voluntary leaflet distribution (*step six*). It is a period of intense anti-CCP campaign on behalf of the National Union PSD+PUR. Media turned into a battlefield between the government party and its allies and the representatives of CCP. The Coalition was constantly accused of 'conspiracy', 'ill intentions', 'pseudo-civic terrorism' and its members were called 'a bunch of criminals'.[8] Government-controlled media

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8   „Open letter to the Coalition for a Clean Parliament", from Dan Voiculescu, president of the Humanist Party (PUR), November 9th 2004.

developed formats very similar to Bolshevik tribunals, with the only reason to attack the CCP. Beyond the declarative level, the National Union PSD+PUR asked the Central Electoral Bureau and ordinary courts to ban the CCP leaflets, but all judicial decisions were taken in favor of the Coalition.

On a fourth level, unidentified forces launched a broad campaign of fake leaflets distribution. These 'poisoned' leaflets used the CCP format, the CCP members' signatures, but the names of the PSD candidates had been replaced with DA Alliance candidates.

This virulent anti-CCP campaign of the government party and its allies has mainly had a reverse effect, by offering more visibility to the Coalition and raising the stake for its pro-integrity in politics campaign. What in normal conditions would have been just a marginal initiative from the part of the civil society, turned to be an unexpected success in terms of visibility and public awareness. And mostly all because of the forcefull reaction of the National Union PSD+PUR to the CCP initiative, correlated to a positive and rather mature behavior of the opposition parties.

Relationship with the media

Two perspectives should be considered in the media-CCP relationship: the perspective of the involved media and that of the uninvolved media. By *involved* we refer to the presence of actions that are far beyond the limits of the mass communication function assumed by the media, such as implication in the activities of or against the CCP.

At the level of involved media, a striking dichotomy arose, between the *individual journalists* and *media groups*. On one side there were *individual journalists* that took effective part in the actions of CCP as investigators or reviewers in the elaboration of the unfit candidate lists. Most of them worked for the coalition under the strict reserve of anonymity and have finally been paid for their investigations. At the same

time, on the CCP side, we have two media-oriented (and media-originated) NGOs[9] that assumed the recruitment and networking function for the local investigators.

On the other side, there were *media groups* (especially the Intact Group, belonging to the family of Dan Voiculescu, head of the Humanist Party) that developed a coherent and aggressive campaign against the initiative of CCP, in virtue of media ownership interests. It is mainly about national or local media groups owned by members of the PSD+PUR National Union or by groups with related interests.

If we think of uninvolved media, comments and materials on the Coalition activities have been regarded rather favorable or neutral. As one of the interviewees remarked, uninvolved media reflected CCP's actions more or less favorable according to previously generated trust or mistrust in the actions of the Coalition partners.

The CCP experience. What to learn?

The Coalition for a Clean Parliament has been an outstanding effort of the Romanian civil society, both in terms of complexity and logistics. It is not easy to assess its success with relation to its declared goals. However, 98 black-listed candidates holding eligible positions haven't been elected to the parliament, as a result of having been either withdrawn by their parties or 'defeated by the voters' (Mungiu-Pippidi 2005: 8).

There are a few conditions that have largely contributed to the visibility of the program (see also Mungiu-Pippidi 2005: 16-18). Some of them are related to the general socio-political environment – we should mention here (*a*) a general feeling of frustration and dissatisfaction related to

9   The Centre for Independent Journalism (CJI) and the Media Monitoring Agency (MMA), both partners in the Coalition for a Clean Parliament.

the 'political class' among the population; (*b*) a continuous external (EU, US) pressure towards effective anti-corruption programs, that has continuously highlighted the issue of political corruption.

The others are related to the specific campaign environment of 2004: (*c*) the visible contrast in the public reactions of the main political forces in front of a campaign pro-integrity in politics; (*d*) the governing party's (and its allies) extremely aggressive reaction against the CCP, leaving a general impression of 'guilt covering'. This overreaction did nothing else than highlighting the actions and issues of the CCP and raising the stake of the anti-corruption game (that wasn't favorable at all to a governing party); (*e*) the ability of the main opposition force (DA Alliance) to manipulate the game of withdrawals into its own favor.

But what are the drawbacks of the CCP campaign, if any? First, it has feebly reached its target (the average citizen) in a direct manner. By the time the leaflets have reached the public, the general opinion had already been framed by the main actors (parties, mass media). Second, the reached target (political elite) was different from the target aimed or declared (average citizen). The CCP took the things into its own hands, and only secondarily left the final voting decision to the citizen. Its relation to the political parties along *steps 4 and 5* can easily be characterized as a 'moral blackmail'. Third, the means employed cannot be easily accepted as specific to the civil society. In fact, the CCP largely performed as a political actor with extra-powers due to its civil society origins. Nevertheless, it added more weapons in the electoral battleground that have easily reached the hands of the opposition. Unintentionally, the CCP transformed itself into a catalyst of campaign issues. Fourth, the Coalition's démarche could be seen as not entirely moral with respect to its declared target, the public, since its leaflets presented only the pieces of information

that had failed the test of political blackmail before. Though this has been a strategic effect-maximizer decision, its moral character is questionable. Fifth, the CCP did not always succeed in ensuring a perfectly objective and equidistant application of integrity criteria at local level.

Civil society as a watchdog of fair elections

Domestic election monitoring has a rather long-standing tradition in post-communist Romania. And this tradition is largely associated with the names of two non-governmental organizations, Pro Democracy Association (APD) and the League for the Defence of Human Rights (LADO) that emerged in the early 1990s. During their first years of existence, both organizations have had rather similar evolutions, but in the late 1990s the latter one's existence followed a rather descendent curve. Usually, this involution is explained in terms of organizational incapacity of attracting external funding. Such a situation has normally translated into an increasing share of governmental funding which set serious limitations in its activities. In reverse, Pro Democracy had a stronger capacity of implementing viable external-funded programs and successfully set an extensive network of local county-level 'clubs'.

The 2004 electoral year set a première in the field of domestic election monitoring, since the previous NGO bipolarity has been broken. LADO did not succeed in the effort of setting up a network of volunteer observers for the general elections and played only a marginal role in the pre-electoral legislative negotiations. Under these circumstances, Pro Democracy assumed the pole position in the list of election monitoring organizations (EMOs).

In the second half of 2004, the Romanian parliament has been the scene of a largely-supported attempt to modify the electoral legislation. This was not an unusual situation, since modifications of the electoral rules became a tradition of every pre-electoral period. The novelty was that APD,

as a representative of the civil society with a respectable tradition in election monitoring, was invited to take part in the activity of the parliamentary commission designated to prepare the legislative modifications. As it is easy to anticipate, APD was not intended to play an effective role in the commission's activity, but mainly to lend extra-legitimacy for the legislator's decisions.

However, Pro Democracy was actively involved in the work of the commission by reassessing the need for a new Electoral Code and introduced a rather coherent law project. In spite of APD's efforts (with the support of a few leaders of the main opposition force, the DA PNL-PD Alliance), in the end, all the provisions of the civil society-originated code had been rejected or ignored by the parliamentary commission. Thus, the commission preferred to work on the existing laws and introduced only conjuncture changes.

Unsatisfied with the result of the commission vote, Pro Democracy adopted a different strategy in its effort of influencing the parliament's decision. The next step translated into an open letter addressed to every MP indicating seven broad categories of reasons that made the law project incapable to secure the fairness and the transparency of the elections for the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies. More, the letter's provisions have been publicly presented in front of the deputies by a representative of the DA Alliance, but without any success. The law has been adopted in the form proposed by the commission.

Once all possible paths of conventional influence exhausted, Pro Democracy decided to take advantage of its privileged position of unique generally accepted non-partisan EMO. Both APD and the Government were aware that the lack of internal observers would have had severe consequences upon the legitimacy of the election results. This is why Pro Democracy was in the position of having a significant blackmail potential upon the Government. About two month before the elections APD decided to make use of it.

Specifically, the General Assembly of the Association publicly announced its decision to observe the electoral process only if the Law no. 373/2004[10] became subject to changes in order to correct or eliminate the aspects that might have lead to fraud. The only public institution able to initiate such changes was at that moment the Government. Pro Democracy sent an open letter to the Prime Minister Adrian Năstase in which it presented its point of view.

For the first time, APD's forceful style of negotiation seemed to be a winning decision (at least partially), since the Năstase government took the Emergency Decision no. 80/2004 that modified the Law no. 373/2004. It was not a radical change (only two of the seven problems highlighted by the APD were solved), but it was a gain in the effort of setting up more fair and transparent rules for the elections. The most important change was the 'liberalization' of electoral observation.[11] Under these circumstances, APD announced its decision to observe the elections.

The first round of elections took place on November 28th and generated a huge scandal related to presumed frauds. Pro Democracy accredited 3,565 observers in Bucharest and 32 counties,[12] mainly targeting polling stations placed in rural areas, usually more vulnerable to fraud attempts.[13] Observers' reports have been extremely negative, suggesting that every weak point of the electoral legislation had been frequently speculated. Multiple voting, electoral tourism,[14] threaten

10 Concerning the organization of elections for the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate.

11 Since 1996, the successive election laws provided that internal observers could be accredited only for a single polling station and that each polling station could have only one observer.

12 From a total of 41 counties.

13 About 2,500 observers reached rural areas.

14 People transported with buses in order to vote in multiple polling stations.

or aggressed observers were only the top of the iceberg. Under these circumstances, the APD report emphasized the large probability for the election results to be biased by the increased level of fraud, estimated at about 3 to 5%.

Signals coming from the opposition (DA Alliance) confirmed the APD reports, and the public discourse of the main civil society or political opposition leaders violently accused the government of electoral fraud. This whole debate, correlated with repeated errors in the process of vote counting, generated a general state of nervousness in the population. And the top of the cake was the rather small difference in the electoral scores of the National Union PSD+PUR (first placed) and of the opposition DA Alliance (second placed), placed within the limits of the electoral fraud previously stated by the civil society and the opposition.

This proved to be the right moment for the Pro Democracy Association to put more pressure on the Government on the issue of electoral legislation. It was a moment when APD's blackmail potential was at the highest level. So, the organization publicly announced its decision not to observe the second round of the elections, since the legislative framework was unable to ensure a reasonable level of fairness for the elections. Under these circumstances, APD stated that "the monitoring process is not able to contribute to the fairness of the elections, but only to the legitimization of the winners" (APD Report 2005: 52). During the first two days after the APD announcement, the Government reaction has been extremely feeble. Vigorous demands for APD to change its decision came from external actors, as the Delegation of the European Commission in Bucharest or the Embassy of the United States, which did nothing than to put more pressure on the Government.

All these developments forced the Government to do a step back and the Prime Minister Adrian Năstase to publicly

ask APD to continue the monitoring process for the second round of presidential elections. Pro Democracy conditioned its acceptance on a change in the legislation that could limit the possibilities of electoral fraud, especially the case of multiple voting. Five days before the elections, at the end of a meeting of APD with the staff of the Central Electoral Bureau (BEC)[15] and with the representatives of the PSD+PUR Union and of the DA Alliance, it was adopted the Decision no. 105. This BEC decision stated (*a*) the possibility of transit voters to vote only in special polling stations and (*b*) offered free access for the EMOs to the voters' lists, in order to investigate the cases of multiple voting. This was a real success (though partial) for the Pro Democracy and the following (natural) decision was its acceptance to monitor the second round of the general elections.

The second round of the presidential elections took place on December 12th. Though the stake of the game was extremely high, the frequency of illegal behaviours decreased compared to the first round. APD observers faced similar challenges, but less frequent, as the organization's report mentioned.

Pro Democracy continued its monitoring effort in the post-election period, with the clear intention to 'set an example' for the future electoral processes. It set up the basis for a systematic process of identification of multiple voters (people who fraudulently cast their votes more than once, in different locations). As part of the pilot program, APD introduced in a large database the names and personal information of 9,322 electors located in the Ilfov county.[16] The results were astonishing, since 351 of them (about 3.76%) cast their votes at least twice on the territory of the

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15 The leading electoral authority in Romania.

16 The county where the biggest number of fraud attempts and observer aggressions had been reported.

county. Pro Democracy started legal proceedings against all the 351 fraudulent voters in the late spring of 2005. Since APD's financial and human resources were limited, the organization challenged the official institutions of the state to identify and punish all the cases of multiple voting.

Indirect relationship with political parties

Pro Democracy was not alone in monitoring the 2004 elections (Table 5). There were a few other NGOs able to send impressive numbers of observers. But APD was the only 'large-scale' EMO with a clear non-partisan status. Since 1996, the legislative limitations in the number of observers accredited for one polling station have stimulated the emergence of the so-called "ghost organizations", EMOs with "a questionable commitment to an impartial, democratic process" (Bjornlund 2004: 227). In fact, these organizations were initiated 'in the proximity' of the political parties (mainly of the Social Democratic Party), with a clear intention to disrupt the activities of legitimate organizations and to reduce their presence at polling stations (OSCE/ODIHR Report, *apud* Bjornlund 2004: 227).

Table 5. Internal observers accredited in the Romanian 2004 general elections

EMO	Number of accredited observers	% of total observers
Pro Democracy Association (APD)	3,565	37.6%
Organisation for the Defence of Human Rights (OADO)	1,731	18.2%
"Mihai Viteazul" Foundation	1,179	12.4%
"Millenium" Foundation for Human Rights	784	8.3%
Civil Society Club	766	8.1%
EuroDEMOS	445	4.7%
Romanian Youth Association for the United Nations	298	3.1%
Others (22 other organizations)	722	7.6%

Source: *"Alegerile parlamentare şi prezidenţiale 2004" (Institute for Public Policy Report), p. 121.*

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This tradition of "ghost organizations" continued in the elections of 2004, in spite of the changes in the electoral legislation.[17] It is rather unclear the continuity in such practices, except for a questionable intention to legitimate frauds in the electoral process. However, these organizations turned to a marginal role in the 2004 elections.

Another attempt from the political parties to influence (or control) the observation process was by the placement of partisan observers on the lists of non-partisan EMOs, the so-called 'poisoned observers'. Pro Democracy had faced this problem before and in time developed self-protection mechanisms.

The monitoring experience. What to learn?

Pro Democracy Association invested a lot of effort in the electoral observation in 2004. The Association put into practice a complex program of *electoral monitoring*, with all the connected implications. It is remarkable that APD has successfully become a first rank legislative actor, in spite of the sharp resistance from the political society. However, if the morality of some of its means can criticized, it is certain that they were effective.

It is also clear that APD was significantly more successful in putting pressure on the Government than on the Legislative. There are a few possible explanations for this state of things.

First, the Government was more aware of the external consequences of an APD decision not to observe the elections, mainly in terms of the legitimacy of results. Elections followed an extensive period of critiques addressed to the party in government by the US Embassy, the British

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17 Government Emergency Decision No. 80/2004 had liberalized the observation of elections by eliminating the restrictions in the number of observers per polling station, previously limited to one.

Embassy or the Delegation of the European Commission in Bucharest, related to issues like the freedom of expression, media control, etc.

Second, APD's blackmail potential reached its highest quotas when it became the only experienced and legitimate non-partisan EMO. There was no alternative of negotiation from the real civil society for the Government, so all has become a win-lose game, where APD successfully played its cards.

Third, APD's pressure came in a particularly tensed electoral environment. In such an environment, a no-step-back position of the Government would have produced severe damages to the image of the party, with a high potential of being speculated by the opposition.

Alternative programs of continuous monitoring

Our review of the strategies and practices employed by the civil society in relating to the political society in the particular electoral moment of 2004 would not be complete without a short look on two other monitoring programs, Media Monitoring Reports and "Money and Politics".

Media Monitoring Reports was a program developed by the Media Monitoring Agency (MMA) and financed by the National Endowment for Democracy and Reporters sans Frontières. The program monitored the way Romanian media reflected the presidential candidates in the pre-electoral period. MMA's analysis was structured along both quantitative and qualitative criteria. Briefly, the report emphasized the presence of clear partisan positions in the content of news reflecting the electoral campaign. The explanation of such deviations is usually related to the media ownership interests.

Money and Politics was a program developed by the Pro Democracy Association (APD) and funded by the Canadian International Development Agency. The program did an

external monitoring of the expenses of the main electoral actors for political advertising in relation to the declared incomes and to the legal expense thresholds. APD's report emphasized the huge discrepancies between the official incomes and the advertising expenses for the PSD+PUR National Union, but also for the PNL-PD Alliance (DA) and the extra-parliamentary New Generation Party (PNG). The report also indicated a general trend of directing more than half of the advertising expenditures towards the presidential candidates, in an attempt to speculate a supposed leadership effect.

Crossing the border: trade unions become political actors

A part of the civil society, namely trade unions, did not join the above mentioned campaigns. Some of the unions (National Confederation of Trade Unions – Cartel-Alfa and the Confederation of Democratic Unions in Romania – CSDR) kept a distance from the electoral competition and the election monitoring, swinging between involvement and observation of these two processes. Other trade unions were already involved in electoral campaigns. National Confederation of Free Trade Unions in Romania – CNSLR-Frăţia, a long term collaborator of the left-wing governmental party PSD promoted union leaders on PSD's election lists as it did in 2000 in the previous elections.

BNS (the National Union Bloc of Trade Unions) was attracted by the political competition and decided to establish its own party. Capturing an older and unknown party (National Democratic Party) BNS transformed it into the National Democratic Bloc Party (PBND) and after several negotiations with various other political parties joined the national extremist Greater Romania Party (PRM) during the elections. BNS managed to negotiate with PRM a joint list to be promoted during the 2004 general elections. The coalition between PBND and PRM passed the 5% threshold. Thus, a

part of civil society and of trade unions became a political competitor, exiting the civil society area.

It was not a singular case during the post-communist electoral process. In the 1992 elections, trade unions organized a political party that unsuccessfully entered the competition by establishing the Party of the Social Solidarity. It was the first large failure of trade unions in the tentative promotion of their interest directly at the decision-making level. A second case of unsuccessful civil society involvement in political competition was the 1996 participation of the Civic Alliance Party (PAC). The party emerged as a political arm of the Civic Alliance, the most known and active civil society organization in the early transition years. In spite of promoting highly professional intellectuals PAC did not manage to pass the 3 percent threshold in order to send representatives in the Parliament.

The latest tentative political involvement of BNS raises the questions about the impact of trade unions involvement in the 2004 electoral competition and whether trade unions do have the capacity to help parties gaining more votes if electoral agreements are signed. During every post-communist election, Romanian political parties looked for electoral support that could be received from different groups, trade unions included. Trade unions augment their presence in political-like issues and tend to extend to the maximum the benefits they could receive in electoral years as a result of their interaction with parties. During electoral years political parties tend to be more opened to issues defended by unions – governmental parties need social stability, while the opposition parties tend to use the unions in order to acquire larger electoral support. Still, the idea of bilateral benefits seems doubtful due to lack of empirical evidences of the electoral support that trade unions finally offer to political parties. There is no evidence of the electoral benefits for parties as a result of electoral protocols signed with trade unions.

Figure 1. *Trust in trade unions (percentage of respondents)*

	Sep 97	Dec 97	Jun 98	Nov 98	May 99	Nov 99	May 00	Nov 00	May 01	Nov 01	Jun 02	Oct 02	May 03	Oct 03	May 04	Oct 04	Oct 05
−	49	57	57	55	60	66	69	65	55	58	63	63	65	63	64	59	56
+	24	26	23	29	30	15	14	19	24	21	24	25	17	17	23	18	24
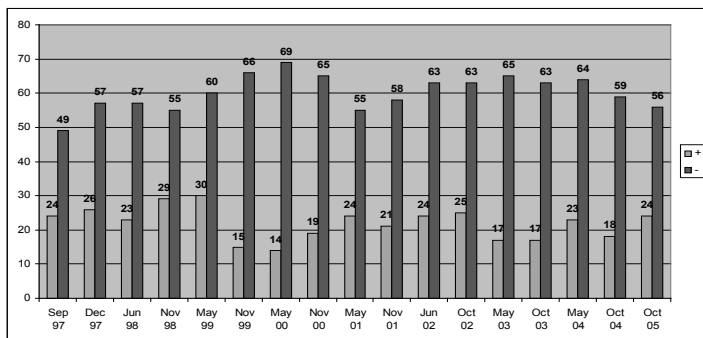
Source: *Open Society Foundation Public Opinion Barometer.*

Note: The numbers represent rounded percentages. "+" stands for "a lot" and "very much" trust in trade unions; "-" stands for "few", "very few" and "not at all" trust in trade unions. The spring 2005, and 2006-2007 waves of OSF Barometer surveys do not include the "*trust in unions*" item.

Romanian trade union confederations often argue in their interaction with the political actors that they represent their members' interests. Even when union leaders call for negotiations with the government and employers, or call for protest movements they call these in the name of 'members' interest' or of 'union's interest'. Still, as the public opinion polls revealed after 1989, people see themselves moreover distant from unions and capitalize very little trust in trade unions as organizations (Figure 1).

In spite of the collaborative patterns between parties and trade unions, it seems that political parties do not obtain the pursued aims: mass electoral support fails to be collected; the visibility at the level of voters/union members does not increase; the relation with electorate is not better because of the fact that none of the two partners – union or party – is perceived by the electorate as having close relations with it and being concerned with voters' issues; the institutional trust did not increase during the years of electoral cooperation,

as percentages in Table 6 suggest. The only benefit seems to be the social stability, which might be sufficient enough for parties to pursue electoral protocols with unions. Signing electoral agreements between unions and parties does not influence the voting preference for that particular party. The electoral agreements would have a contrary effect – the voters might consider the union-party agreement a top level affair that does not pursue members' interests/problems, but only the leaders' ones. Such cooperation would produce either a lose-lose outcome, in which both the parties and the trade unions lose trust, or win-lose outcome, in which office-seeking trade union leaders win places in Parliament or in government, while the parties lose places on their lists. These places could otherwise be filled with parties' own candidates, thus losing places in Parliament in case trade union representatives decide to deject the coalition they formed with the party. This was the case in January 2005, when the union representatives of PBND in parliament broke their coalition with Greater Romania Party and got out of its parliamentary group joining informally the governmental right-wing coalition.

The alternative would be promotion of neo-corporatist arrangements in the form of collective bargaining and social pacts between state, trade unions and employers' association, that could provide a social peace necessary for the cabinet to implement policies impacting employees and employers.

3. Conclusions

Civil society has proven outstanding capacities of involvement in the 2004 general elections in Romania that have not been anticipated by any of the political actors. No matter the success or the morality of its actions, this experience emphasized the need to reassess civil society's role, strength and opportunities to control and challenge the political society in an electoral environment. It is obvious

that neither the political society, nor the civil society were prepared to fully manage the new situation.

On the one side, the civic advocacy organizations succeeded to put into practice their blackmail potential in relation to the political elite. This result was facilitated by the convergence between the objectives of the external actors and those of the civil society. Their success is closely related to the continuous experience of public visibility and political contacting of the involved organizations, experience that maximized their capacity of bargaining.

However, these organizations have failed to a certain degree to reach the masses with their message, failure that could have had consequences for the future basis of support of them. Especially in the case of the Coalition for a Clean Parliament, there was a non-negligible potential for the initiative to be interpreted as a political one by the citizens, with the connected consequences. In spite of all these reservations, the civic advocacy organizations' initiatives have put a supplementary pressure for accountability on the shoulders of the political elite, helping by this to turn transition politics into a new era.

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THE ORIGINS OF POLITICAL SUPPORT FOR DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE IN POST-COMMUNIST ROMANIA. TESTING THE SOCIAL CAPITAL HYPOTHESIS

Dragoş DRAGOMAN

The transition to democracy in Central and Eastern Europe was marked by incertitude. After 1989, when euphoria already disappeared and the economic and social constraints began to channel the specific evolutions of the countries in the region, it was clear that only the starting point was guaranteed, not the path or the ending point.[1] The developing gaps between the states during the transition period are not only in terms of economic development, but political as well. The economic gap is easier to explain by the economic centralization and by the varying performances[2], and also by the strategies of state capital conversion and the foreign capital flows.[3] The "new managerism" and its

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1 David Stark, László Bruszt, *Postsocialist Pathways. Transforming Politics and Property in East Central Europe*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

2 David Stark, "Path Dependence and Privatization Strategies in East Central Europe", *East European Politics and Societies* 6, no. 1 (December 1991): 17-51.

3 David Stark, Balász Vedres, "Social Times of Network Spaces. Sequence Analysis of Network Formations and Foreign Investment in Hungary, 1987-2001", paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association, San Francisco, 2004.

economic interests shaped the openness of the economy and the transition to a capitalist economy.[4]

What makes the greatest difference is the openness of the political system toward a full competition, the proper functioning of state institutions and the respect of citizens' fundamental rights and liberties. Not only the states in the region gained differentiated access to several international and regional organizations as the Council of Europe, NATO and the European Union, but they differ a lot in the democratization process, whatever would be the democratization measure we choose.[5] The gap between post-communist countries widened so much that it is often useful to differentiate between groups of countries and "waves" of accession to the European Union.[6]

What make the difference between countries in the region could be institutions or democratic knowledge, beliefs, values and attitudes. In the process of transition, institutions are much easier to reshape than anything else. Ralf Dahrendorf considered that an institutional reform would be possible in one-year time, under favorable conditions even in six moths.[7] Transforming economy would take longer, maybe six years. The greatest effort to make and the longest process in time would be the change in political culture, from a dependent to a fully civic one. The citizens' commitment

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4   Gil Eyal, Iván Szelény, Eleonor Townsley, *Making Capitalism without Capitalists: The New Ruling Elites in Eastern Europe*, (London: Verso, 2001).

5   Sten Berglund, Kjetil Duvold, "The Difficult Art of Measuring Support for Regimes. An Inventory and Evaluation of Democracy Criteria", paper presented at the European Consortium for Political Research Joint Sessions of Workshops, Granada, 2005.

6   Richard Rose, "A Diverging Europe", *Journal of Democracy* 12, no. 1 (2001): 93-106.

7   Ralf Dahrendorf, *Reflections on the Revolution in Europe* (New York: Random House, 1990).

towards democracy is essential, and it should overpass a limited and instrumental commitment. The beliefs of political activists in the authority, legitimacy, efficiency and the prestige of democracy, emphasizes Dahl, are important conditions.[8] From this point of view, citizens' characteristics are more important that economic transformations and the institutional design. We therefore intend to measure the importance of several factors for democracy, and we emphasize on cultural factors, grouped under the large label of social capital. Is social capital essential for the democratic foundations in Romania? Social capital is, certainly, credited with capacity of promoting a competent, participatory, civic citizen.[9] Should it be also responsible for the support for democracy? Does it explain more than other factors do, i.e. human capital, economic resources and civic attitudes, factors grouped by Rose and Weller in the so called "classical paradigm"?[10]

In order to measure the importance of different factors for democracy, we use the data of a survey conducted in Romania in November 2005, comissioned by the Open Society Foundation. This survey is part of World Values Survey (the wave 2005-2006), a larger inquiry conducted in no less than 50 countries. At the same time, this is part of a larger project financed by the Open Society Foundation, namely the Public Opinion Barometer (POB).[11] The sample

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8   Robert A. Dahl, *Poliarchy. Participation and Opposition* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1971).

9   Robert D. Putnam, *Making Democracy Work. Civic Traditions in Modern Italy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993).

10 Richard Rose, Craig Weller, "What Does Social capital Add to Democratic Values?", in *Social Capital and the Transition to Democracy*, ed. Gabriel Bădescu and Eric M. Uslaner (New York: Routledge, 2003).

11 Available at http://www.osf.ro/ro/detalii_program.php?id_prog=18

used is composed of 1776 respondents aged of 18 years and more and it is representative for the Romanian adult population, with a calculated error of ± 2.3%.

Pro-democratic attitudes

The support for democracy is measured by using a realistic definition of a regime, rather than a idealistic one. In the dispute between the two definitions of democracy, Rose and Mishler stress the superiority of the competitive definition.[12] It is worth to remember Dahl's remark about the attachment to political regimes that are imperfect, but perfectible and deeply tolerant and human. The liberties promoted by democratic regimes lost the charm that usually represents a new cause, they lost their revolutionary charm. These liberties are more often taken for granted. Those people who lost them or never had such liberties, are much more thankful for.[13] And Romanian citizens missed for a long period of time the benefits of these liberties. They have the historical experience enabling them to make a realistic evaluation of political regimes. We will therefore use in the analysis a measure that assesses how strongly people reject some plausible undemocratic alternatives, and which expresses the attachment for democracy as a competitive regime.

Table 1. Attitudes regarding the undemocratic alternatives (%)

How good would it be for Romania…	Very good	Good	Bad	Very bad	DK/ NA
To have a strong leader, who does not bother with parliament and elections	28.9	36.8	12.9	5.4	16.0
That experts reach a decision, instead of government, as they consider to be the best decision for the country	22.6	37.6	14.9	3.8	21.1
To be ruled by a military regime	5.2	11.5	35.2	30.2	17.7

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12 William Mishler, Richard Rose, "Political Support for Incomplete Democracies: Realist vs. Idealist Theories and Measures", *International Political Science Review* 22, no. 4 (2001): 303-320.

13 Robert A. Dahl, *Poliarchy*.

The democratic indicator we use is built up by adding the disagreement with the alternatives above. The three items make up a consistent scale, as measured by the reliability analysis (Crombach's Alpha = 0,8106). Looking to the share of citizens accepting a strong leader, we may easily believe in a tendency in favor of authoritarianism. Yet we have to look to the three items together. There are only 16,9% of the respondents who do not reject any undemocratic alternative, whereas 48,2% reject a single alternative, 25,4% reject two alternatives and 9,4% reject all of them.

Social capital

Cultural factors has been widely accepted in the last decade as one of the important ingredients of democratization. In particular, social trust, reciprocity and altruism are determinants of cooperation, which in turn, facilitates the development and growth of the political resources of individuals and groups, enabling them to influence the political system. Therefore, trust, reciprocity and altruism have important direct effects, by influencing the members of the groups, but also indirect effects, by influencing the political system. Instead of isolated, distrustful and powerless individuals, through the process of cooperation, one can find in society organized civic groups that carry out specific actions of political communication (lobby, advocacy) and manage to control politicians in office. Such organized groups in civil society could force politicians to be more responsible, responsive and efficient by promising political support or by threatening with its withdrawal. The citizens' response to such responsible behavior of politicians is a growing demand for political solutions, which are at the same time accompanied by satisfaction, trust and partisanship moderation. This is the virtuous circle of modern democracy. The opposite is easy to imagine, that is alienated citizens and irresponsible, corrupted and indolent political elites.

But what are the social institutions responsible for such favorable effects? Voluntary organizations are one of the strongest contenders. No matter their explicit or implicit political nature, they seem to yield desirable internal effects:[14] participants get more oriented towards political system, more interested, competent and political efficacious. The most important result is that citizens rely more on political cooperation under stressful circumstances. Cooperation is also favored by other effect that participation might have, like attitudes of trust and tolerance. The contact between individuals with different social background, people who differ on various characteristics (ethnicity, religion, language) fosters tolerance ant lessens social conflicts. Some scholars believe that such cooperation is in favor on many other phenomena, as education performance and crime rate reduction.[15] Other scholars consider that self-rated health (or even health) may be significantly related to social capital.[16]

Not everyone accept the supposed relationship between participation in voluntary associations and democratic performance. For many scholars this in not at all obvious that participation produces the highly valued public and private goods. This is because the relationship itself is contestable. According to Putnam, voluntary associations do the job of "bonding" and "bridging" individuals and groups, and help them to overpass deep cleavages in society.

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14 Gabriel A. Almond, Sidney Verba, *The Civic Culture* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963).

15 Robert D. Putnam, "Social Capital: Measurement and Consequences", *Isuma. Canadian Journal of Policy Research* 2, no. 1 (Spring 2001): 47-59.

16 Gerry Veenstra, "Social Capital and Health", *Isuma. Canadian Journal of Policy Research* 2, no. 1 (Spring 2001): 72-81. See also Olaf von dem Knesebeck, Nico Dragano, Johannes Siegrist, "Social capital and self-rated health in 21 European countries", University Medical Center Hamburg, GMS Psychosoc Med, 2005, doc. 2.

The condition that Putnam takes for essential is that these associations are completely apolitical. This condition raises a series of questions. If they are apolitical, how could these organizations favor political participation and civic engagement without engaging in specific political debates and without representing social interests? We must remember that civil society may be seen as a decisive counterweight of the state and a fearless opponent of the totalitarian state. If it is the case, than we have a paradox of the civil society, as emphasized by Edwards and Foley.[17] If civil society is strong enough to destroy authoritarian political order, which are the guarantees that democratic state will not be undermined? And why civil society should only be composed by peaceful groups and not by violent ones, as Mafia or Ku-Kluk-Klan? Without legitimate state coercion and rule, wouldn't we experience an outburst of violent conflict between social groups? The same civil society that fights against totalitarian state may be a threat for democratic governance, since it can push the government to adopt particular interests, standpoints and aspirations over the public goods. This kind of interests could obstruct society and government to respond to disadvantaged demands, making thus possible that these social blocks confront violently for the control of the state.[18] One should not disregard Mancur Olson's argument, that a dense network of associations could become a burden for the fair functioning of states and markets.[19]

There are many other doubts about the importance of the voluntary activity, namely about the effects on other

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17 Michael W. Foley, Bob Edwards, "The Paradox of Civil Society", *Journal of Democracy* 7, no. 3 (1996): 38-52.

18 Rocco Sciarrone, "Réseaux mafieux et capital social", *Politix* 13, no. 49 (2000): 35-56.

19 Mancur Olson, *The Rise and Decline of Nations. Economic Growth, Stagflation and Social Rigidities* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982).

significant variables for the democratic process. Participation in voluntary organizations is commonly seen as related to the interpersonal trust, while the latter is an important for cooperation. Although there are confirmations of the relationship between voluntary participation and trust,[20] many scholars continue to be skeptical about it. The positive correlation between the two variables that is found across various surveys may be the consequence of a selective recruitment of the participants in secondary organizations. In other words, their members are exactly those who trust other people, whereas people who display less trust are not to be found between the members of such organizations. Even when one can find a positive correlation between variables, the relationship is statistically weak.[21] Even in theory, there are few arguments in favor of this relationship: the time one spends in the organization is incomparably more reduced than that spent in other socializing environments, as family, school, workplace or neighborhood. Secondly, there are other factors that already proved important for trust and civic engagement, e.g. the education, as Almond and Verba demonstrated.[22] Therefore, the political support for democracy might not come from participation in voluntary organizations, and the political and economic performance of government might be more important that usually expected.[23]

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20 Dag Wollebaek, Per Selle, "Does Participation in Voluntary Associations Contribute to Social Capital? The Impact of Intensity, Scope, and Type", *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly* 31, no. 1 (2002): 32-61.

21 Kenneth Newton, "Social Capital and Democracy in Modern Europe" in *Social Capital and European Democracy*, ed. Jan van Deth (London: Routledge, 1999), 3-24.

22 Gabriel A. Almond, Sidney Verba, *The Civic Culture*.

23 Kenneth Newton, "Political Support. Social Capital, Civil Society, and Political and Economic Performance", Center for the Study of Democracy, University of California, Irvine, paper 06'07, 2006, http://repositories.cdlib.org/csd/06-07

It is already a common finding that level of social capital in Central and Eastern Europe is lower than in western societies.[24] But different scholars explain differently the gap between societies. There is no doubt that Central and Eastern European countries differ from the western countries in respect of their recent past. Whether one does not consider trust as a psychological trait which may influence many aspects of later behavior,[25] than socializing conditions could be responsible for the cooperation and commitment style of citizens. From this perspective, the actual social connections come from the general constrains of the communist system, based on tight ideological control and mobilization, deletion and repression. Distrust, social atomization, and loose cooperation could all originate in the kind of connections people had in communist time.[26]

Social and economic problems that citizens face could be another factor explaining low levels of social capital in the region. Struggling through transition, people hardly find time to spend in company of friends, and have no time at all to spend for non-profit activities. Low levels of participation in secondary organizations could be explained by the lack of resources, and also by the disappointing experience they had with communist forced mobilization, the persistence of informal cooperation networks and, finally, by the frustration caused by the performance of the new democratic and economic system.[27]

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24 Gabriel Bădescu, Eric M. Uslaner, eds., *Social Capital and the Transition to Democracy* (New York: Routledge, 2003).

25 Gordon W. Allport, *Pattern and Growth in Personality* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1961).

26 Beate Völker, Henk Flap, "Weak Ties as a Liability. The case of East Germany", *Rationality and Society* 13, no. 4 (2001): 397-428.

27 Marc Morjé Howard, "Why Post-Communist Citizens Do Not Join Voluntary Organizations", in *Social Capital and the Transition to*

Important conditions for the future consolidation of democracy are the consent and support of the citizens. And this is not only about an idealistic attachment to democracy. We don't use an idealistic definition of democracy as the best form of government. It was already proved that the strongest attachment to democracy in idealistic terms can be found exactly where democracy performs badly, in countries one could hardly label as quasi-democracies.[28] The advice we take is to use a realistic definition of democracy, a competitive definition, which can compare democracy to plausible undemocratic alternatives.[29] By this way citizens could estimate the performance of a vivid regime, compared to past and well-known alternatives, that they could evaluate an ideal regime. Giovanni Sartori emphasizes that a terrible danger for democracy is the widespread correlation between unrealistic expectations of the citizens and the ideal traits of democracy. The inevitable pessimism that arises from this occurrence is undermining for democracy.[30]

In the analysis, we use a definition of social capital that combines psychological traits, namely the social trust, and structural features, as the density of networks of cooperation. The latter dimension is expressed by activism in different kind of voluntary associations and its indicator is build

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Democracy, ed. Gabriel Bădescu and Eric M. Uslaner (New York: Routledge, 2003).

28 Hans-Dieter Klingemann, "Mapping Political Support in the 1990s: A Global Analysis", in *Critical Citizens: Global Support for Democratic Governance*, ed. Pippa Norris (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 78-99.

29 Richard Rose, William Mishler, Christian Haepfer, *Democracy and Its Alternatives. Understanding Post-Communist Societies* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998).

30 Giovanni Sartori, *The Theory of Democracy Revisited* (Chatham, N.J.: Chatham House, 1987).

Table 2. Participation in voluntary organizations

| Type of organization | Member | | | | (if the case) do voluntary (unpaid) activities | | |
	Active	Inactive	Don't belong to	NA	Yes	No	NA
Religious or church organization	5.3	4.4	90.1	0.2	42.2	42.2	15.6
Sports and recreation	1.0	1.0	97.9	0.2	14.3	45.7	40.0
Education, arts, music	1.1	0.7	98.0	0.2	21.9	46.9	31.3
Labor unions	3.8	2.8	93.2	0.2	18.5	81.5	----
Political parties	2.5	1.3	96.0	0.2	44.4	55.6	----
Ecological	0.2	0.5	99.2	0.2	25.0	25.0	50.0
Professional associations	1.2	0.5	98.1	0.2	26.7	23.3	50.0
Charitable organization	0.8	0.4	98.6	0.2	59.1	9.1	31.8
Consumer organizations	0.1	0.4	99.3	0.2	11.1	22.2	66.7
Other type	0.5	0.2	99.2	0.2	54.5	27.3	18.2

exactly by adding the participation in all sorts of associations (Crombach's Alpha = 0,9554).

As we have stressed already, not everyone agrees with the definition of social capital. Following Coleman, the psychological traits should not be part of it.[31] However, civic attitudes, such the social trust become more and more part of social capital's definition. In our survey, only 19.3% of the respondents believe that one can trust other people, whereas 75.6% believe that one can't be too careful in dealing with people (Table 2). There are differences between Romania and other countries in the region, and western democracies. They could be real, yet could they come from the meaning of "people". Bădescu emphasizes that a better operationalization would be one that takes into account ethnic trust.[32] The difference is obvious when we ask

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31 James S. Coleman, "Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital", *American Journal of Sociology* 94 (1988): 95-119.

32 Gabriel Bădescu, "Social trust and democratization in post-communist societies", in *Social Capital and the Transition to Democracy*, ed. Gabriel Bădescu and Eric M. Uslaner (New York: Routledge, 2003).

Table 3. Trust in different kind of people

How much do you trust the following kind of people	Very much	Much	Not too much	Not at all	NA	DK
Family	75.8	20.3	2.2	0.6	0.3	0.8
Relatives	26.4	52.0	17.5	3.3	0.3	0.6
Neighbors	8.3	40.6	38.9	10.8	0.8	0.7
People you know personally	5.7	48.5	34.1	7.7	2.7	1.2
People you meet for the first time	1.2	10.9	45.8	36.1	4.8	1.1
With other religion	2.1	25.0	40.7	20.8	9.9	1.6
With other nationality	2.2	23.2	40.8	20.7	11.4	1.8

about different kind of people, which may back up Bădescu's findings (Table 3).

We also include in the measure of the social capital the norms of reciprocity (trustworthiness), though measuring such norms could prove more difficult. These norms are related to individual selfish or altruist behavior. The latter takes into account the consequences one's actions could have on others, while the former does not. The items presented below express the level of agreement with free-riding. The indicator built up on using these items is considered by van Schaik, who follows Stolle and Rochon,[33] as well as Knack and Keefer[34], to be a *proxy* for the norms of reciprocity.[35]

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33 Dietlind Stolle, Thomas S. Rochon, "Are All Associations Alike?: Member Diversity, Associational Type, and the Creation of Social Capital", *American Behavioral Scientist* 42, no. 1 (1998): 47-65. Dietlind Stolle, Thomas S. Rochon, "The myth of American exceptionalism: a three-nation comparison of associational membership and social capital", in *Social Capital and European Democracy*, ed. Jan van Deth, Marco Maraffi, Kenneth Newton and Paul Whitely, 192-209, (New York: Routledge, 1999).

34 Stephen Knack, Philip Keefer, "Does social capital have an economic pay-off? A cross-country investigation", *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 112, vol. 4 (1997): 1251-1288.

35 Ton van Schaik, "Social Capital in the European Values Study Surveys", paper presented at the OECD-ONS International Conference on Social Capital Measurement (London: September 2002).

According to Stolle and Rochon, social capital also expresses the willingness to participate to common duties. In an environment dominated by high levels on social capital people expect less that others to free-ride and, therefore, they are themselves less motivated to free-ride. Authors expect members of associations to develop an ethic condemning the free-riding when dealing with public goods and governmental policies. According to social capital theory, voluntary associations help participants to enlarge their interests and the definition of self, turning „I" into „us" even when associations follow specific and private oriented interests. The cooperation that arises is therefore a proof, that people put common interest in place of their selfish interests, stresses van Schaik. Knack and Keefer also consider that norms of reciprocity are defined by attitudes of cooperation with strangers in prisoner dilemma settings.[36] Civic cooperation is generated by the people's willingness to cooperate when confronted to an issue related to collective action. That is why van Schaik uses the rejection of free-riding as a proxy for reciprocity norms.

Reciprocity norms are measured by the agreement with a series of sentences regarding different kinds of behavior. Marks ranging on a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 means that such a behavior could never be justified, and 10 means that it is always justified express agreement. The means and the standard deviations of the four items are presented in Table 4. By adding the items we build an indicator of egoism (Crombach's Alpha = 0,8057).

In addition to these features of social capital we will take into account the so called diffused social capital, a concept that refers to relationships which help individuals to integrate into the community, such as the church attendance and the rural residence, but also the confidence in state

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36 Knack and Keefer, p. 1258.

Table 4. Agreement with free-riding behavior

Please tell me for each of the following statements whether you think it can always be justified, never be justified, or something in between, using this 1 to 10 scale	Mean	Standard deviation
Claiming state benefits which you are not entitled to	2.04	2.05
Travel by bus/train without paying a ticket (free-riding)	2.01	1.94
Cheating on tax if you have the chance	2.34	2.48
Someone accepting a bribe in the course of their duties	1.45	1.33

institutions. We follow in the analysis the extended model of social capital used by Rose and Weller in their study of social capital in Russia.[37] The authors also include in the definition of social capital some dimensions that are closer to the definition of James Coleman, namely instrumental social networks that vary in different contexts. Thus the authors also measure social capital by the instrumental benefits of joining social networks, i.e. the support people benefit of in stress settings, when they need someone outside their family to help them when getting ill or when they need consistent financial aid.[38] In fact, Russia is much similar to other communist countries in this respect.[39] In the analysis we use an indicator of helpful social networks to indicate whether people have social connections they can use in hospitals, in courts of justice, in public administration, when dealing with lawyers and policemen or when they look for a workplace or a bank loan.

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37 Richard Rose, Craig Weller, "What Does Social capital Add to Democratic Values?", in *Social Capital and the Transition to Democracy*, ed. Gabriel Bădescu and Eric M. Uslaner (New York: Routledge, 2003).

38 William Mishler, Richard Rose, "What Are the Political Consequences of Trust? A Test of Cultural and Institutional Theories in Russia", *Comparative Political Studies* 38, no. 9 (2005): 1050-1078.

39 Beate Völker, Henk Flap, "Weak Ties as a Liability. The case of East Germany", *Rationality and Society* 13, no. 4 (2001): 397-428.

As stated above, accepting reciprocity norms reveals a disposition to put the common interest in first place, and therefore it could be seen as an altruism indicator. Another element of diffuse social capital is trust in executive and authority institutions, e.g. the government, police, courts of justice and the army, and trust in representative institutions, e.g. the parliament, political parties, presidency and mayoralty. In fact, the linkage between social and institutional trust is endlessly debated. Whereas scholars such as Norris[40] consider the influence running from interpersonal to institutional trust, Brehm and Rahn depict the relationship as circular,[41] while others, including Newton, doubt about any relationship between the two types of trust.[42]

Finally, social integration can be influenced by living in rural areas and by the churchgoing. Both variables could have a different effect compared with that of living in cities, which is a place where different social interactions occur. Mishler and Rose often use these variables as proxies for socialization.[43]

Participation to protests

Protesting, as a distinct form of political participation, represented in the '60s and '70s a surprise and generated a great controversy about its causes. Scholars started first to

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40 Pippa Norris, *Critical Citizens. Global Support for Democratic Governance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).

41 John Brehm, Wendy Rahn, "Individual-Level evidence for the causes and consequences of social capital", *American Journal of Political Science* 41, no. 3 (1997): 999-1023.

42 Kenneth Newton, "Trust, Social Capital, Civil Society and Democracy", *International Political Science Review* 22, nr. 2 (2001): 201-214.

43 William Mishler, Richard Rose, "What Are the Origins of Political Trust: Testing Institutional and Cultural Theories in Post-Communist Societies", *Comparative Political Studies* 34, no. 1 (2001), p. 49.

study protests in the Unites States, probably the most tranquil western society after World War II.[44] Their interest was to determine the causes of change in the public's behavior, which gave rise to different kind of social movements. Whereas the United States in the '50s faced violence mostly confined to specific work conflicts, they were then confronted with new movements such as peace meetings and rallies against war in Vietnam, mass demonstrations in favor of black people, women and other social minorities.

There are two perspectives on protesters. Some scholars argue that they are not basically different from other political participants, being rather similar to party members and civic volunteers. In this way, protest is just another form of participation. These scholars stress that protesters are also to be found in more conventional political actions.[45] At the same time, other scholars claim that protesters are different. They do not participate to some more traditional political actions and do not vote as frequently as general population. Moreover, in post-communist societies, protesters were found to be more dissatisfied with the ongoing transition and consider more often that political and economic system fails to respond to citizen's demands.[46]

The rise in protest in western countries was related to the general change in social conditions, to the growing emphasis on post-material values and then to an attitudinal change

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44 Samuel H. Barnes, "Perspectives on Political Action: A Review Twenty-five Years Later", paper presented at the ECPR Joint Sessions of Workshops, Uppsala, 2004.

45 Pippa Norris, Stefaan Walgrave, Peter Van Aelst, "Who Demonstrates: Anti-State Rebels, or Conventional Participants? or Everyone?", *Comparative Politics* 37, no. 2 (2005): 251-275.

46 Eric M. Uslaner, "Bowling Almost Alone: Political Participation in a New Democracy", paper presented at the ECPR Joint Sessions of Workshops, Uppsala, 2004.

towards politics and political institutions.[47] Could this be the case in Romania? According to Uslaner, protest in Romania and other similar societies in the region may rather express people's discontent with the general social conditions. Whereas conventional participation, such voting and party membership, represents the support for the political regime, protest represents discontent and frustration. Like in western societies, protesters may prove more discontent with democracy.[48]

We measure protest by the citizens' past involvement in activities such signing a petition, joining in boycotts and attending lawful demonstrations. We build a protest indicator that is compute as a sum of the three items (Crombach's Alpha = 0,9370).

Economic resources

The importance of economic performance have become even more obvious after the collapse of communist regimes in Central and Eastern Europe.[49] We expect that "winners", in terms of resources and opportunities, support democracy much more than "losers" in transition. Revenue, household financial satisfaction and hope in a future improvement of

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47 Ronald Inglehart, *The Silent Revolution: Changing Values and Political Styles Among Western Publics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977).

48 Pippa Norris, "Young People and Political Activism: From the Politics of Loyalties to the Politics of Choice?", Report for the Council of Europe Symposium: *"Young people and democratic institutions: from disillusionment to participation."* Strasbourg, November 2003. See also Therese O'Toole, "Engaging with Young People's Conceptions of the Political", *Children's Geographies* 1, no. 1 (2003): 71-90.

49 Adam Przeworski, *Democracy and the Market. Political and economic reforms in Eastern Europe and Latin America*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

everyday life represent the economic resources. Democracy should demonstrate its economic effectiveness, and a current lack of effectiveness must be balanced by the hope of a future improvement. Communist regimes lost any popular support when they proved enable to fulfill their economic responsibilities and workers' strikes in 1956, 1968, 1970 or 1980 dissipate any lasting illusion. Yet their capacity of guaranteeing human rights vanished much earlier.[50]

What influences the support for democracy in Romania?

We will analyze the impact of the factors described above on the support for democracy. Using a somehow similar survey in Russia (New Russia Barometer, 1998), Rose and Weller did not find support for the assertion that social capital is important for democracy.[51] Instead of replicating their analysis, we will follow their advice in the use of variables in the analysis. We first measure the importance of civic attitudes, economic resources and human capital, clustered in a group that Rose and Weller labeled as the *classical paradigm*.

The total variance explained by the regression model that is described in Table 5 is only 2.9%. The only variables with a significant impact are the income and the education, but their impact is rather modest. We need therefore to look for another explanation of the support for democracy, and this is social capital. As stated above, we include in the model measuring the impact of social capital a broader definition of the social capital, by adding the dimensions of the diffuse social capital and measures of social integration.

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50 Janos Kornai, *The Economics of Shortage* (Amsterdam: North Holland Publishing Company, 1980).

51 Richard Rose, Craig Weller, "What does social capital add to democratic values?", in *Social Capital and the Transition to Democracy*, ed. Gabriel Bădescu and Eric M. Uslaner (New York: Routledge, 2003).

Table 5. Civic attitudes, economic resources, human capital
and the support for democracy

	B	S.E.	Beta
Constant	0.800	0.235	
Democratic governance is important	0.02	0.014	0.054
Human rights are observed in Romania	-0.04	0.034	-0.045
Personal income	0.00008	0	0.089**
Satisfied with household income	0.01	0.015	0.045
Optimism with everyday life in one year	0.02	0.034	0.031
Gender (male)	-0.009	0.053	-0.005
Age	-0.0001	0.002	-0.004
Education	0.01	0.010	0.071*
Status	-0.01	0.019	-0.032
Control over one's life	0.006	0.013	0.018
adj. R square	**0.029**		

Regression analysis (OLS). $* \ p < 0.1$; $** \ p < 0.05$.

Accepting the free-riding, claiming state benefits which you are not entitled to, cheating on tax or accepting bribe in the course of the duties means accepting a selfish behavior. Another element is the density of instrumental relationships, which enable people to handle the everyday problems, like seeing a doctor, a lawyer, a notary public. The last element is confidence people have in executive (authority) institutions (government, police, courts of justice, army) and in representative institutions (parliament, political parties, presidency and mayoralty). We make a difference in social integration by two variables, the church attendance and living in a rural area. Both variables may have different effects than living in cities, a space with dissimilar social interactions.

The regression model presented above has an unexpectedly low explanatory power, lower than expected, for the support for democracy. The single significant effect is that of the rural residence, but its impact is also modest. Living in rural areas could represent a different socializing context, unfriendly for democracy. Considering the small fraction of variance explained by this model, it is easy to anticipate no increase in explanatory power for the integrated regression model which

Table 6. Social capital and the support for democracy

	B	S.E.	Beta
(Constant)	1.222	0.134	
Membership in voluntary associations	0.008	0.062	0.004
Social trust	0.03	0.068	0.018
Egoism	0.004	0.004	0.036
Density of profitable relationships	0.0004	0.015	0.001
Trust in authority institutions	-0.01	0.015	-0.034
Trust in authority institutions	0.02	0.014	0.064
Church attendance	-0.00004	0.017	0
Rural residence	-0.147	0.017	-0.083**
adj. R square	**0.003**		

Regression analysis (OLS). **$p < 0.01$.

takes into account all relevant variables, civic attitudes, economic resources, human capital, protest and social capital alike. The tables that follow present the integrative model of regression for the support for democracy.

Table 7. The integrative model explaining the support for democracy

	B	S.E.	Beta
(Constant)	0.807	0.303	
Democratic governance is important	0.03	0.016	0.072**
Human rights are observed in Romania	-0.07	0.038	-0.070*
Personal income	0.0001	0	0.104***
Satisfied with household income	0.007	0.016	0.022
Optimism with every day life in one year	0.02	0.037	0.026
Gender (male)	-0.01	0.058	-0.006
Age	-0.0004	0.002	-0.008
Education	0.02	0.011	0.083*
Status	-0.007	0.021	-0.018
Control over one's life	0.009	0.014	0.024
Membership in voluntary associations	-0.01	0.031	-0.013
Social trust	-0.01	0.077	-0.007
Egoism	0.005	0.005	0.042
Density of profitable relationships	-0.03	0.019	-0.062*
Trust in authority institutions	-0.009	0.017	-0.024
Trust in authority institutions	0.008	0.016	0.023
Church attendance	0.001	0.019	0.002
Rural residence	0.001	0.066	-0.011
adj. R square	**0.029**		

Regression analysis (OLS). * $p < 0.1$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$.

Table 8. The models explaining the support for democracy

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
(Constant)				
Democratic governance is important	0.054			0.072**
Human rights are observed in Romania	-0.045			-0.070*
Personal income	0.089**			0.104***
Satisfied with household income	0.045			0.022
Optimism with every day life in one year	0.031			0.026
Gender (male)	-0.005			-0.006
Age	-0.004			-0.008
Education	0.071*			0.083*
Status	-0.032			-0.018
Control over one's life	0.018			0.024
Protest		0.008		0.008
Membership in voluntary associations			0.004	-0.013
Social trust			0.018	-0.007
Egoism			0.036	0.042
Density of profitable relationships			0.001	-0.062*
Trust in authority institutions			-0.034	-0.024
Trust in authority institutions			0.064	0.023
Church attendance			0	0.002
Rural residence			-0.083**	-0.011
adj. R square	**0.029**	**-0.001**	**0.003**	**0.029**

Regression analysis (OLS). * $p < 0.1$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$.

Discussion

The main result of our analyses is that social capital has virtually no importance for the support for democracy. The inclusion of social capital measures does not add anything to the "classical paradigm" explaining the support for democracy by civic attitudes, economic resources and human capital altogether.

This finding is consistent with the results of Rose and Weller's research in Russia. At the same time, the two societies display several differences. The "classical paradigm" accounts for 22% of the variance of the support for democracy in Russia, but less than 3% in Romania. Whereas social capital model accounts for 5.5% of the variance in Russia, it has almost no effect in the Romanian case. In both contexts, there is no support for the assertion that

"hard" elements of social capital, such as the membership in voluntary associations or social trust, have an effect on the support for democracy. Another difference between the two societies is that whereas diffuse social capital has no importance in the Romanian case, density of useful relationships, the church attendance and trust in authority institutions have significant effects in Russia.

Support for democracy is influenced by civic attitudes and economic performance of the regime. In this respect, because in most of the ex-communist countries it is expected that economic conditions will improve on the longer term, support for the new regimes is likely to remain stable or increase[52]. Therefore, although Romania may not have a strong civil society, characterized by a dense network of voluntary organizations, the risks for the new democratic regime are not that high.

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SOCIAL CAPITAL AND SUPPORT
FOR DEMOCRACY IN EAST CENTRAL EUROPE

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"Social capital and institutional networks are identified as key components of dynamic political and economic governance at the regional level, which is closely linked to the adaptability and Europeanization function" (Paraskevopoulos, 1998b, 38)

Since originally advanced by Robert Putnam in 1993, the idea of social capital has gained increasing acceptance among social and political scientists as a useful tool in analyzing "the quality of democracy". In its initial formulation, social capital was understood as "features of social organization, such as networks, norms and trust that facilitate coordination and mutual cooperation for mutual benefit" (Putnam, 1993, 36). The concept was further operationalized and refined by many scholars and proved its applicability and explanatory force in areas such as economic performance and international relations.

This paper explores the connection between social capital and democratic consolidation in Central and Eastern Europe, in the context of European Union integration. Given that social capital is seen as conducive to a greater degree of democracy, more participatory citizenship and improved economic performance, and since the European Union makes increases in social as one of its priorities, I examine

the degree of social capital in different countries in Central and Eastern Europe, and its relationship with support for democracy. The European Union's approach towards social capital is found most literally in its cohesion policy. The latter becomes necessary in harmonizing levels of economic and social development, and it is precisely for this reason that, for a short time, it became the second highest prioritized item in the EU budget.

The analysis focuses on 14 Central and Eastern European countries – Poland, Hungary, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Romania, Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Albania, Moldova, Ukraine, Belarus and Russia. The choice of countries reflects different levels of democratic transition and consolidation, and also different statuses with regards to European Union integration. In fact, if the European Union is preoccupied with increasing social capital and deepening democracy in its new member states, then one would expect to see different levels of social capital in more democratic countries, and also a stronger positive relationship between measures of social capital and support for democracy. The dataset employed in this research is part of the World Value Survey last wave from the late 1990s and early 2000s. Accordingly, the data set comprises Central and Eastern European member states, applying candidates, which in fact have become full fledged members by 2007 and former communist countries that are still transitioning to democracy and whose prospects for EU integration are either absent or very improbable.

The structure of the paper starts with a discussion on social capital and the ways in which the European Union prioritizes social capital in its cohesion policy. At the end of this section, the reader will have a fairly clear idea about the interaction between social capital, EU integration and democracy. In the second section of the paper, I analyze public opinion data in order to show levels of social capital

in the 14 countries mentioned above and also for testing the influence that measures of social capital have on support for democracy. The main goal of this paper is to see whether European Union integration and successful democratic consolidation lead to an increase in social capital, which, in turn, affects support for democracy. If the hypothesized virtuous circle between social capital and democracy is indeed present, then citizens of Poland, Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia should indeed be more supportive of democracy and display higher levels of social capital.

Social capital and the EU

Social capital became a priority of the European Union through its regional policy. In this section I introduce social capital and regional policy, and then I briefly examine the European Union's official position towards social capital as a community resource and also a policy tool.

EU regional policy

Due to the need for EU states to collaborate and elaborate common policies, it becomes necessary to build a harmonized ground in economic, political and social terms. Regional policy is meant to provide precisely such an outcome. Regional policy is also often referred to as cohesion policy, because it aims at reducing the differences across the European Union: "EU cohesion policy refers to the set of activities aimed at the reduction of regional and social disparities in the European Union" (Hooghe, 1996, 3).

There are at least three rationales underlying the very existence of regional/cohesion policy. The first is economic, and addresses the need "to overcome adverse affects of market integration on disadvantaged regions" (Hooghe and Keating, 1994, 368). Secondly, the social rationale is identified at the level of principle: people across the EU have to live in comparable conditions. Finally, the third

rationale is political and consists in "the need to legitimize the new economic and political order" (Hooghe and Keating, 1994, 370).

The origins of the regional policy can be found in the 1972 enlargement of the union. The European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) came into existence as a response to the UK's demand for a reward for its budgetary contribution (Wishlade, 1996, 32-33). The fundamental principle behind it was quota-based allocation of funds to member-states. During the eighties, regional policy became diversified, so that additional funds were created: the European Social Fund (ESF), the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF) and the European Investment Bank (EIB).

According to Ian Bache (1998) there have been four developments in EU regional policy. The 1975-1978 phase was characterized by intergovernmental bargains, with the Commission starting to acknowledge its own role. The 1988 reform is of utmost importance, as it brought the principle of partnership into play. According to this principle, both sub-national authorities and non-governmental actors were provided with the opportunity to take part in different stages of policy formulation and implementation; in turn, this "challenged established hierarchical relationships between central and sub national governments" (Bache, 1998, 141). Therefore, the role of partnership is:

…to reduce disparities, give structure to self-governance, diffuse principles of solidarity, participation and positive regulation, and practise multi-level decision-making… (Hooghe, 1998, 469).

The 1993 and 1999 reforms bear further witness to the Commission's efforts to keep the partnership principle on the agenda, while member states try to bring back more intergovernmental principles.

Moreover, the principles of subsidiarity and additionality complement the partnership principle. Thus, the principle of

subsidiarity states that "responsibilities should be exercised at the lowest possible level" (Hooghe and Keating, 1994, 378). In turn, additionality refers to the fact that "Community assistance should not replace but should supplement national and regional financial efforts" (Hooghe and Keating, 1994, 378).

The widely recognized contribution of multi-level governance (MLG) is to bring the sub national level of government into the process of EU policy formulation and implementation. Initially, the concept of MLG

…focused on the spin-offs, which emerge from interplay between central state and European-level institutions and, more or less incidentally, disperse decision-making powers to SNAs (sub-national authorities) and empower them to engage with and influence the EU policy process… (Marks, 1992, 1993, Marks et al., 1995, quoted in Jeffery, 2000, 6).

However, in Marks's opinion, sub national authorities (SNAs) play a passive role, merely reacting to potential stimuli, here the process of involving the sub national level is seen as essentially a top-down process. Jeffery turns this perspective in its head and argues for a bottom-up model, in which "SNAs may […] actively seek to, and succeed in, changing those dynamics in ways which facilitate their European policy engagement" (Jeffery, 1996, 214). Therefore, the emergence of the idea of a European Domestic Policy was characterized by the following core assumption: European policy should not be regarded as foreign policy, and thus the regions should have direct access to the center of European policy-making (Jeffery, 2000).

EU regional policy is thus aiming at reducing disparities among regions. Assuming the multi-level governance approach, the collaboration between different levels of governments becomes important in both formulation and implementation of this policy. Furthermore, local specificity is to be taken into account when conceiving this policy.

Defining and operationalising social capital

Social capital is a relatively recent concept. Nevertheless, the attention it received from both the academic community and the political elite (EU, World Bank) makes it one of the most powerful and dynamic concepts in the social sciences nowadays.

It appeared at the beginning of the century, but it became well known with Bourdieu's work and especially Robert Putnam's study on Italy. Social capital is a resource "whose supply increases rather than decreases through use and which becomes depleted if not used" (Putnam, 1993, 38). Putnam's definition was modified by Kenneth Newton, asserting that social capital consists of (a) norms, (b) networks and (c) consequences--voluntarily produced collective facilities and resources (Newton, 1997). The clarification this definition brings regards the uncertainty of consequences, facilitating collective action.

Almost all of the attempts to operationalise this concept suffer from the same fallacy: authors transform social capital into an umbrella concept, an explanatory variable for virtually any social and political phenomena (Portes and Landolt, 1996). The level of measurement for social capital is the community, taken to refer to a wide range of entities from smaller groups of bowling players, to larger geographic/cultural units. Moreover, in a recent reconceptualisation by Campbell, Putnam and Yonish (1999) social capital also acquires an individual dimension, namely civic engagement.

One important part of social capital literature attempts to tackle the issue of whether social capital is just a pre-existing resource, or it can be created through intentional acts. While Putnam's original idea was that social capital is given, and thus immutable, he changed his mind in subsequent works, identifying channels through which social capital can be created or increased.

In turn, this is closely related to that approach of state/society synergies, which opposes "endowments" to "constructability". The former emphasizes

…the dependence of successful state/society synergies on a preexisting strong civil society and presence of substantial stock of social capital […] while the latter stresses the possibility of short-run institution building though processes of synergistic relations… (Paraskevopoulos, 1998a, 161).

In conclusion, the concept of social capital refers to a certain community resource, which, if properly activated, would improve the overall economic performance in the respective region, and thus would lead to "better" democracies.

Cohesion policy and social capital

Three arguments will be offered in order to sustain the hypothesis that the EU policy makers are acquainted with social capital theory.

First of all, in *The Sixth periodic report about the delivery of structural funds* (1999, used as main official document) the importance of social capital is specifically mentioned. The Structural Funds are structured in a way that assumes social capital has "a major influence on the institutional structure in different regions, particularly the efficiency of public administration" (The European Commission, 1999, 66). Moreover, multi-level-governance insists on horizontal relationships between the supranational, national and sub national authorities:

…[cohesion policy] entails a multi-level system of governance, within which the relationship between the different levels is one of partnership and negotiation rather than a hierarchical one… (The European Commission, 1999, 66).

The principle of partnership is also relevant at this point, as "elected regional and local bodies have an integral role in the Structural Funds" (The European Commission, 1999, 68).

This assertion finds support in social capital theory. Putnam considers the structure of a network is crucial in deciding the successful creation of social capital, and states that horizontal, non-hierarchical relationships are the most beneficial (Putnam, 1995). Moreover, associational culture constitutes a relevant variable, in explaining sub national authorities' representation in Brussels: "sub national governments in associationally rich regions are more likely to seek representation in Brussels" (Marks et al., 1996, 57). In other words, pre-existing social capital determined efficient accession to Brussels of sub national governments.

Secondly, the value attached to trust is relevant. There is a substantial amount of literature on trust and social capital. Thus, while Putnam considers trust to be an essential component of social capital, Eric Uslaner distinguishes between three types of trust. "Interpersonal trust" (also called "moralistic trust") refers to trust people have in other people, without having previous information about them. Strategic trust is of two kinds: personalized (trusting people, on the basis of previous experience) and particularized (trusting people similar to us). Finally, trust in the government relates levels of trust people have in public institutions to their performance (Uslaner, 1999, Stolle, 1998).

Cohesion policy initiators have taken this aspect into account, as monitoring committees in each region, are an intrinsic part of those respective communities. Furthermore, the fact that monitoring committees pay attention to local cultural specific is very important, as these committees are involved in doing fieldwork, and through their presence they might build people's trust. Various organizations collaborate in this respect, from representatives of the EU, to local governments of different regions, and the business

associations. The wide array of interests and methods involved in certain goals thus relies on building a milieu of trust and cooperation: "Effective institutional networks require civic engagement that is the presence of social capital" (Parakevopoulos, 1998a, 163).

Finally, the new EU cultural policy, and its relation with the cohesion policy, indicates that it acknowledges the role of social capital (the first part of my hypothesis). The cultural policy of the EU is seen by its initiators as "a way of developing peripheral regions" and thus relates with the cohesion policy. (Delgado-Madeira, 2000, 452). After the Maastricht Treaty, the Commission adopted two Communications: 'New prospects for Community Cultural Action' (Commission, 1992) and 'European Community Action in Support of Culture' (Commission, 1994) (Delgado-Madeira, 2000, 454).

The relationship between cultural and cohesion policy is proved by three arguments: 1) the Commission "estimated the cultural aid in horizontal, regional development programs, which were not allocated to the culture industry as a sector"; 2) the funds available for this policy are sizeable; 3) "the Commission sees culture as a potential source of regional development" (Delgado-Madeira, 2000, 461).

This strong connection between regional and cultural policy strongly indicates the EU's preoccupation with cultural specificity across the Community. It is evident that encouraging the preservation and promotion of cultural patterns in various regions preserves social capital.

Consequently, it becomes evident that the EU takes social capital into account in both economic and political terms. Thus, the EU recognizes that "social capital has major consequences for the nature of the industrial economy that society will be able to create" (Fukuyama, 1995, 27).

However, the EU perspective is rather rigid. Undoubtedly, the need to preserve social capital and to respect cultural

patterns is explicitly acknowledged. Nevertheless, there is little indication of a more dynamic perspective, which would aim at increasing social capital. Therefore, the next subsection will focus on the characteristics and consequences of this perceived rigidity.

It is usually the case that a unit's economic performance is given by successful strategies, as well as by "the human factor". In this respect, the "embeddedness argument" elaborated by Granovetter states that "social relations, rather than institutional arrangements or generalized morality, are responsible for the production of trust in economic life" (Granovetter, 1985, 491, quoted in Paraskevopoulos, 1998b, 34). He stresses "the social character of economic action, the role of networks as a function between markets and hierarchies, and the process of institution building" (Granovetter, 1985, quoted in Paraskevopoulos, 1998b, 34). Here, Granovetter concurs with North, who argues that a missing factor in economic analysis is "an understanding of the nature of human coordination and cooperation" (North, 1990, 11).

The analysis elaborated above provides the framework for understanding the diversity of outcomes resulting from EU structural funding. Thus, the EU provides funds to be administered by supranational, national or sub national actors. There is evidence that this financial assistance is not always adequately used. As made apparent by the sixth periodic report on the delivery of structural funds (as cited above), important recipients of structural funds (such as Spain, Portugal, Greece and Ireland), have reached different levels of economic performance. While the Irish government used the funds to develop and stimulate the Irish economy, the funds allocated to Greece were spent on covering previous deficits.

Paraskevopoulos (1998a, 1998b) offers further evidence for this phenomenon. In his analysis of two groups of Greek

islands, he observed that, even if both groups benefited from structural funds from the EU, the southern group used the funds in order to induce further development, while the northern groups chose to spend it on social subsidies (Paraskevopoulos, 1998b). This situation brings into light a shortcoming of structural funds policy, namely the failure to take into account the differences between the two groups of islands. Thus, I argue a more in-depth look at both groups in the first place could have indicated different patterns of evolution, both economically and culturally. Here, social capital could have proved itself to be an invaluable analytical tool.

The argument provided by Ostrom illuminates the consequences of the example examined above: external assistance does not always improve performance, as

…there are many sources of heterogeneity among participants facing collective-action problems […] these asymmetries affect the bargaining strength of participants and resulting outcomes (Ostrom, 1995, 147).

Secondly, MLG presupposes that all three levels of the government are involved, while preserving subsidiarity. In the same report, I identified Spain and Portugal, as two important recipients of structural funds, and looked at the relationship between three levels of government. I expected a large involvement of both local governments and local business groups, as recommended by the partnership principle. I also expected involvement of local organizations at the level of implementing the policy, as they possess first hand information. Surprisingly, in Spain "local authorities, private business and trade unions play a relatively minor role in the Monitoring Committees and in the implementation of policy" (The European Commission, 1999, 71). In Portugal, the situation looks more or less similar: the relevant actor is the Commission for Regional Coordination, which consists

of decentralized units of the government, and not of local authorities (The European Commission, 1999).

It is true that not all EU member states have similar levels of decentralization. However, investing more trust and responsibilities in the local public and private organizations would be a step towards more subsidiarity. Additionally, this would increase social capital, by involving local associations in the process of policy implementation.

Thirdly, the problem of trust is highly important. In the previous section, I have proved that the EU makes considerable efforts to determine people to trust the supranational authority. However, even if the EU seems to take good care of each region's cultural specific, overall trust in government could still be low in some regions.

Moreover, one needs not ignore trust among people. Uslaner (1999) considers that trust in government is least important for social capital, while interpersonal trust is the most important. Accordingly, Knack and Keefer (1997) proved that interpersonal trust is correlated with economic growth. Moreover, they assert that the influence of trust is higher in poorer countries than in the richer ones.

The last observation is important because it is closely linked to the fact that the largest recipients of structural funds are the poorest EU countries. Therefore, because trust is so important for economic performance, EU should try to build durable trust relationships with local and regional associations, so that the latter can integrate itself in the new supranational arena. McAleavy (1995) refers to the value of trust and to the "human dimension" in the implementation of programs, which should be perceived "not just in the technocratic sense of promoting expertise, but also as the evolution of reputation effects and trust" (McAleavy, 1995a, 338, quoted in Bache, 1998, 142).

My fourth argument regards specifically those volun-tary associations mentioned by Putnam as secondary organiza-

tions. Paraskevopoulos (1998a, 1998b) points out that participation in such organization is rather low in Greece. However, he indicates a slight difference between the two groups of islands in question. While the southern group (also the most developed) has higher rates, and a broad range of voluntary associations, within the northern group this phenomenon is almost non-existent. An idea could be to facilitate cooperation between these two regions, and thus develop trust between them. That could also bring more networks. Dietlind Stolle and Thomas Rochon (1998) make a differentiation between private and public social capital. While the former remains within a community, and thus only its members can benefit from its consequences (i.e. economic performance, or better democracies), in the case of the latter its consequences transcend the boundaries of the original community, and spread towards other groups. If the two groups of islands were encouraged to collaborate, it is likely that the higher rates of social capital from the southern groups would have migrated towards the northern group.

Finally, the relationship between cultural policy and cohesion policy can also be able to help here. Cultural support is available from the EU, as long as it has a lucrative outcome. The initial goal of designing such a policy was to reduce unemployment: "cultural projects will be eligible if they create jobs and are integrated into local or regional development strategies" (Delgado-Madeira, 2000, 455). Although this is not harmful to social capital preservation, it could create a gap between cultural policy for cultural reasons and cultural policy for lucrative/economic reasons. Thus, justification for cultural policy would be merely utilitarian. In this context, Putnam argues, that sometimes countries get too much economic assistance, instead of being assisted in reconstructing their political culture, and reviving their social capital (Putnam, 1993).

The conclusion of this section is that the European Union as a supranational structure does indeed take social capital into consideration and constructs it as a rather valuable resource. Nonetheless, its approach towards social capital is rigid and focuses mostly on pre-existing stocks of social capital. Therefore, in the next section I explore the levels of social capital in Central and Eastern Europe and then also test its relationship with support for democracy and market economy.

Social capital and support for democracy

Social capital is considered in this paper as formed of two main components: trust and participation in voluntary organizations. From the point of view of trust, the distribution of percentages is presented in table 1.

Table 1 Features of social capital per country
(percentage of people saying yes, within each national sample)

Country/ social capital	Trust	Membership Political Parties	Membership Labor Unions	Voluntary Work Political Parties	Voluntary Work Labor Unions	Voluntary Work Sports Associa-tions
Albania	24.3	14.5	9.4	11.4	4.4	8.2
Bulgaria	26.9	3.7	6.1	2.8	3.1	3.7
Belarus	41.8	0.6	39.0	0.8	5.3	1.2
Czech Republic	23.8	3.6	10.5	2.1	2.9	10.5
Estonia	22.8	1.6	4.7	1.4	0.5	3.4
Hungary	21.8	1.6	7.0	1.1	1.3	2.6
Latvia	17.1	1.8	11.2	0.9	2.2	6.2
Lithuania	24.9	1.3	1.9	1.3	1.3	2.2
Republic of Moldova	14.7	5.3	14.4	5.1	7.9	4.0
Poland	18.8	0.7	10.3	.6	2.3	2.2
Romania	10.1	2.3	9.2	1.8	5.9	1.2
Russian Federation	23.7	0.7	23.6	0.3	3.7	1.3
Slovakia	15.7	6.5	15.8	4.8	5.8	13.4
Ukraine	27.2	2.3	20.6	1.3	3.9	0.8

The data in this table depicts a rather mixed story. The levels of trust within a society vary from the very low 10% in Romania to more than 40% in Belarus, with every other country scoring somewhere in between. Interestingly, countries at different levels of democratization and EU integration have dramatically different scores. In fact, all former Soviet countries have higher values than Romania or Slovakia. Although there may be measurement errors with the question itself, the fact that non-democratic countries score higher on the levels of trust is indicative of a potentially non-existent relationship between democratization and EU integration and the development of trust.

The voluntary association membership component of social capital is measured through voluntary work in various non-governmental organizations, and it includes both non-political organizations, such as youth, women's and sports clubs, and political, such as trade unions and political parties. The World Value Surveys include two related measures of participation in voluntary organization, one that measures membership and one that actually asks respondents whether they volunteer time in these organizations. After analyzing both variables I found a fairly high degree between the two, and I chose to use the latter in this research because of its inner conceptual meaning. People that have actually volunteered time in organizations are more involved citizens, in comparison to nominal members of multiple organizations.

Membership in political organizations is also depicted in table 1. While membership in political parties is overall low, voluntary work in trade unions is higher in all the countries. One also notices the influence of the political regime, since former Soviet countries have overall higher rates of voluntary work in trade unions in comparison with the rest of the countries. One explanation for these results is the fact that unionization in former Soviet republics is a

more important social feature, most certainly originating in their communist past, while in the rest of the countries it became a mere option. Contrastingly, voluntary work in these two types of political organization is overall low all over the set of 14 countries.

The same situation is observed for the other non-political organizations. The World Value Survey database includes participation in many non-political organizations: youth, education, professional, sports, women's groups and any other kind of group collapsed in one category. Participation in each group is significantly lower than in other consolidated democracies, but the percentages are fairly similar across categories of organizations. Therefore, table 1 also presents the results for sports associations associations, but the percentages should be considered similar for the other types of organizations.

Given that the data used is survey data on representative samples, the differences between country levels of voluntary work in civic associations are not significant Nonetheless, Albania, Czech Republic, Slovakia and Moldova tend to have the highest values. Although not much heft can be placed on the numerical superiority of voluntary work in these countries, it is nonetheless interesting to observe that they are not part of any traditional geographical area. In fact two countries are part of what is considered as the group of consolidated democracy, one is a former Soviet republic, and one is a former communist country that remained outside of most international structures in the years after 1989.

In conclusion, the levels of trust and voluntary work in non governmental organizations in Central and Eastern Europe at the beginning of the years 2000 vary from one country to the other, with no particular difference between consolidated and transitioning countries. These findings seem to agree with the European Union's position towards social capital, as a pre-existing resource in a community,

and not one that can be improved through institutional involvement. Nonetheless, I now turn to analyzing the influence that social capital measures have on support for democracy and market economy in Central and Eastern Europe, as a further refinement of the relationship between social capital and overall "goodness" of democracy.

The set of countries under analysis include political regimes at different levels of democratic transition and consolidation. Mixed levels of social capital within the set of 14 countries makes impossible the testing of a hypothesis according to which higher social capital correlates with more satisfactory democracy. Following an idiographic approach rather than a nomothetic one, I analyze the relationship between social capital and support for democracy and market economy in countries at different stages of democratization and democratic development, in order to capture the potential mutually reinforcing relationship between social capital and democracy. Social capital is thus expected to contribute positively to the evaluation of political regimes and economic systems because of its inner virtues accentuating trust and community involvement.

For procedural democracy, principal component analysis indicated that two different indices may be constructed. First, there are two items that measure so-called specific support, namely the rating of the political system governing the country, and overall satisfaction with the way democracy develops. While these two items do not test citizens' knowledge of democratic government, they are an overall measure of levels of acceptance of democracy as it is unfolding at one moment in time. The first index contains these two items, and was titled specific support. The second index consists of items that measure support at a more abstract informed level, expressing satisfaction with democracy as a political system, including the opposition to communism. It contains 7 items as follows: evaluations of the communist

regime, opinion towards the importance of a strong leader, and the principle of army rule, the importance of a having a democratic political system, and also the opinion towards three particular traits of a democratic system (whether democracies re indecisive and have too much squabbling, whether democracies are not good at maintaining order, and whether democracies may have problems, but it is still the best form of government). Rejection of the communist regime, of army rule and strong leader governments, together with positive evaluations of the democratic system correlate highly, and this index was titled procedural democracy. Factor analysis indicated a very clear cut between the two indices factor coefficient scores ranking almost equally for each variable composing the indices. Initially an additional item was included measuring the importance of having technocratic governments during transitions and consolidation, but it was subsequently dropped out of the analysis, because of its lack of correlation with any of the other items. These two indices measure evaluations of democracy in both more abstract and specific terms. For both measures, higher values represent more support for democracy. The construction of both indices – specific support and support for procedural democracy – was realized by adding each component variable with equal weights. The procedural democracy index is used in this research as a measure of overall satisfaction with democracy. This variable is more indicative of a society's acceptance of democracy rather than the previous index, which measures mere evaluations of different post-communist governments. If social capital has an influence on acceptance of democracy, it is more important to play a role in its acceptance as a regime, as a set of norms and principles, rather than particular governments.

The attitudes towards privatization have also been grouped in one index, that comprises 4 items, all measured on a one to ten scale: attitudes towards private or state

ownership of business, whether personal welfare should be state's or personal responsibility, whether economic competition is good or harmful for businesses, and whether states should offer more or less freedom to businesses. Overall these 4 items express a person's perceptions of the advantages and disadvantages of the market economy system. Factor analysis has again shown that answers on these four items are correlated, and, consequently, one factor has been extracted. The privatization factor scores higher values for more support for privatization.

The independent variables measuring social capital consist of three variables: trust, political involvement and civic involvement. Trust is measured through a question widely used in comparative research "Do you think most people can be trusted, or that you just can't be careful enough". Involvement in voluntary associations was initially measured through involvement in all non-governmental organizations. Nonetheless, the difference participating in trade unions and political parties formed one index (through factor analysis) while the rest of items concentrated to form a civic engagement index. Therefore, I decided to keep these indexes separate, and test their effect on support for democracy and market economy.

The first category of control variables includes demographic and socio-economic status indicators, used in most studies on political attitudes. The socio-economic indicators are represented in the sample by education and income. Education, on the one hand, is included because of most other findings suggest that favourable attitudes towards democracy increase with education. More educated people have a more informed perception of the political system, they understand its working better, and it is expected for them to be more supportive of it. Also, in Central and Eastern Europe, intellectuals played an important part in the demise of communist regimes, so there is more ground to include

education. The last argument for including education in the set of control variables is the fact that in some research education and religiosity and church attendance variables are correlated. The underlying observation is (Inglehart and Norris, 2004) that education also privatizes religion, and people with less education rely on the church for general information and advice, or even political clues. Therefore, I have also included religious denomination as a control variable, in order to account for transnational variation in support for democracy and also test Huntington's hypothesis on democratic spreading across the Western Christian world. For income the logic is fairly similar, namely that people with higher economic status are also more supportive of the system by virtue of the system allowing them to acquire a certain level of wealth.

In terms of demographic controls, it is customary to use age and gender. The rationale is that women and older people are less supportive of democracy than their younger, male and urbanite counterparts. In the Central and Eastern Europe the gender control is not significant, probably because of the egalitarian policies of 5 decades of communism, and so it was not included in the analysis. Age per se becomes relevant especially in conjunction with income; older people, mostly retired, that worked one job during communism, find themselves on shaky grounds after 1989, and form one of the most uniform category citizens that "lost" in the transition game. Moreover, some older generations, the ones that spent a fairly large portion of their life in communism, have more vivid memories of the totalitarian regime, while younger generations have been educated either at the end or after communism.

The rest of the controlling variables include political interest and national identity. Political interest, such as political discussion, self declared interest or consumption of political news, affect how a person evaluates democracy.

On the one hand, more information about politics exposes the individual to its defects, inefficiencies and may trigger a negative evaluation of the system. On the other hand, political interest may make people understand the difference between the democratic system, which is the only option and thus desirable, and the actual regime in power at some moment in time. To make matters more complicated, political interest should be interacted with the age variable, since forming the perception that democracy is the only option varies with a person's age, and exposure to different types of regimes.

Nationalism is mostly portrayed as harmful to democratization. Nonetheless, some authors have argued the opposite: after all most of the countries in Central and Eastern Europe are fairly new states, and support for democracy as a political system cannot be realized without have a prior territorial sovereign entity. Therefore, I introduced a control variable that asks people how proud they are of being members of their nationality.

Political interest is also included as a control variable, because of the assumption that more political involved people will have different attitudes towards the system. One can expect either a positive effect, assuming that people that are interested in politics are more appreciative of democracy, because they realize the system's benefic feature. On the other hand, a negative expect can also be hypothesized, since exposure to the every day dirty game of politics overemphasizes the system's failures. The political interest index contains three items: frequency of political discussion, frequency of news consumption and a subjective appreciation of interest in politics. Again, only two of these items are available for a subset of countries, and, in this case, the factor was constructed only out of these variables, after checking for consistency.

Finally, several country level independent variables have also been included in the model. I believe that evaluations

of the political and economic system in one country are also dependent on its economic well-being and overall quality of democracy. In other words, a country's level of economic development and democratic evolution influences its citizens' evaluations. Therefore, I have included GDP/capita, the Gini index, EU membership and Freedom House scores. GDP/capita is A classic measure of wealth, and, as mentioned in most transition to democracy literature, economic prosperity is helping democracy, or, at least, affecting its survival rate (Przeworksi et al., 2000). I also included the GINI Index (Muller, 1995b) because I believe that higher inequality also has an effect on how people evaluate their system, especially in a region in which communism made great efforts towards an egalitarian system. EU membership is a variable that has three values, according to which a county is not a member, or it is a recent member (Romania and Bulgaria), or an older Eastern European member. The effect of EU membership is many-fold. On the one hand, the EU accession process requires the implementing of several democratizing and market economy oriented policies. Older members of the EU thus should have higher levels of democracy and privatization, and their evaluations of the system should be affected by this process of enlargement. On the other hand, these policies may render people more dissatisfied with democracy, and especially the economic system, since Poland, Hungary and Czech Republic all suffered a period of economic recession after their integration. Finally, Freedom House scores are also included, because of their attempt to quantify quality and quantity of democracy in the world. The FH democratization score has been introduced here because it combines several measures of democratization: national democratic governance, electoral process, civil society, independent media, local democratic governance, judicial framework and independence and corruption.

All these independent variables are hypothesized to have an effect in support for democracy. In this section I

discussed these effects, and justified the introduction of each control variable. I also offered detailed information on composite index construction. In the next chapter, I report the results of quantitative data analysis testing both the denominational and the 5 contextual hypotheses that I put forth. I examine the effects of religious variables on the formation of pro-democratic attitudes by placing them in statistical models accompanied by the above-mentioned set of control variables.

The effect of social capital on support for democracy and market economy is analysed through OLS regression.

Table 2 shows the effect of social capital measures on support for procedural democracy and privatization.

Table 2 Effects of social capital on support for democracy
and privatization in 14 countries

Independent variable/dependent variable	Support for democracy	Privatization
National identity	.024 ***	.027 ***
Gini	-.154 ***	-.099 ***
GDP	.054 ***	.008
FHD	-.187 ***	.031
EU	-.142 ***	.015
Education	.175 ***	.170 ***
Age	.068 ***	.094 ***
Gender	.008	.086 ***
Income	.097 ***	.159 ***
Political interest	.069 ***	.056 ***
Membership civic associations	.045 ***	.008
Membership political associations	.016 *	-.013
Trust	.060 ***	.048 ***
Catholic	-.018 *	-.025 **
Orthodox	-.029 ***	-.141
Protestant	.016 *	-4.484 ***
Muslim	.108 ***	5.487 ***
Rsq/N	.150/12217	.136/14295

*** significant at <=.01, ** significant at <=.05, * significant at <=.1

At first glance, the effect of both trust and participation in voluntary associations are positively correlated with support for democracy. The effect of controlling variables is also

consistent with the relevant literature. The individual level socio economic indicators have significant impact on support for democracy: education, age and income are all positively correlated with procedural democracy. Additionally, country level indicators are also significant, with more democratic countries, more economically developed countries and countries that are either members of the EU or candidate countries being more supportive, than citizen of former Soviet countries or Albania. The standardized beta indicators suggest that while the country levels indicators are the most important predictors of support for democracy, social capital measures continue being significant at different levels of country wide democratization. The religious indicators also have interesting effects, with Catholic and Orthodox people being overall less supportive of democracy than non-religious individuals, while Protestants and Muslim believers are more supportive. Nevertheless, the positive effect played by Islamism in this data set may be due to the high concentration of Muslim believers in Albania. Islamism potentially represents a country effect and not a religious one. Political interest as another controlling variable plays a significant positive part, and so does pride in nationhood. While the positive correlation between political interest and support for democracy is researched extensively in the literature, a positive relationship between national identity and support for democracy is only scarcely debated in the literature. Therefore, more in-depth analysis on cultural areas of Central and Eastern Europe will be conducted in order to assess more accurately the effect of national identity on support for democracy according to the sovereign statute and date of independence of each country.

Additionally I tested the same predictive model on privatization since social capital is presumed to have a positive effect on economic development. There is evidently no organic reason to believe that social capital would lead to

more capitalist forms of economic development, but given that privatization is the signature of economic development in Central and Eastern Europe, I wanted to see whether there is any correlation between the two. According to Przeworszki, the economic transition from command economy to market economy is frustrating for the majority of the population, and so I explore in what ways social capital influences this economic set of changes at the societal levels. The predictive model for the effect of social capital on support for privatization in the 14 countries is also found in table 2. The results are quasi similar to the ones estimating support for democracy, although some significant differences do exist. Socio-economic indicators, nationhood and political interest affect positively support for democracy, but the country level indicators for democratization stopped playing a part. This effect may be due to the fact that consolidated democracies have ended their privatization process, while Romania and Bulgaria are still implementing it, and the former Soviet Republics do not even necessarily have it. From the perspective of social capital, trust is still positively correlated with support for privatization, but participation in voluntary associations, either political or civic lost their statistical significance.

The results of the two previous two models suggest a need to delve further into the subject, and analyze the relationship between social capital, democracy and market economy in different areas of Central and Eastern Europe. Therefore I split the set of 14 countries in several subsets, according to their level of democratization, economic development and European Union integration. Hence, I analyze 5 subsets of countries, in an attempt to capture the impact of EU integration and overall democratization on the relationship between social capital and support for democracy and market economy. There are two subsets of consolidated democracy: the first consists of Hungary, Poland, Czech

Republic and Slovakia, as the 4 countries usually portrayed as the victors of the transition to democracy process in the whole area. The second subset consists of the three Baltic countries, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, as former Soviet Republics, but also countries with high economic development rates, and successful candidates to the first eastern enlargement of the European Union. The reason for creating two subsets of countries consisting of the Western eastern European countries resides in the fact that the Baltic countries are fairly different when compared to the Central European countries, both in terms of communist past, but also in terms of enthusiasm towards EU integration, much lower in the former subset. The second subset of countries consists of Romania and Bulgaria as the two countries that are in between the consolidated democratic status of Central Europe, and the non-democratic or transitioning status of former Soviet Republics and Russia (excluding the Baltic states). In addition, Romania and Bulgaria also became the latest member of the European Union. The fourth subset of countries includes Russia, Moldova, Belarus and Ukraine, as countries that are not democratic according to Freedom House, and which are usually associated with either authoritarian regimes (such as Belarus), or long unfinished transitions to democracy (such as Ukraine or Russia). Finally, the fifth and last case in the analysis is Albania, which is analysed separately because of its unique position both in the geography of Central and Eastern Europe, its low levels of economic development, slowness of transition to democracy, and also non acceptance into the European Union structures.

In analyzing the effect of social capital on support for democracy and market economy in the five subsets of countries, one needs to acknowledge that these subsets are also differentiated by their religious composition, with countries to the West being mostly Catholic and Protestant, and countries to the East being mostly Orthodox. Furthermore, the country wide indicators for democratization, economic

development and EU integration have been removed from the analysis due to their lack of variation within each subset.

Table 3 shows the effect of social capital on support for democracy and market economy in Hungary, Poland, Czech Republic and Slovakia.

Table 3 effects of social capital on support for democracy and privatization in Hungary, Poland, Czech Republic and Slovakia

Independent variable/dependent variable	Support for democracy	Support for privatization
National identity	-.052 ***	.010
Education	.214 ***	.187 ***
Age	-.004	.045 ***
Gender	.002	.056 ***
Income	.088 ***	.081 ***
Political interest	.134 ***	.076 ***
Membership civic associations	.062 ***	.042 ***
Membership political associations	-.060 ***	-.028 ***
Trust	.068 ***	.058 ***
Catholic	-.085 ***	-.091 ***
Protestant	-.038 *	-.057 ***
Rsq/N	.134/3993	.105/4367

*** significant at $\leq$.01, ** significant at $\leq$.05, * significant at $\leq$.1

While most of the socio-economic indicators remained significant, national identity became negatively associated with support for democracy. Indeed, these four countries have not had a questionable national identity throughout the transition process, and so nationalism is not supportive of further democratization. From the perspective of social capital, trust is positively and significantly correlated with both support for democracy and support for privatization, but the effect of participation in voluntary association suffered an interesting change, from the previous models including all the 14 countries. While participation in civic organizations is positively associated with higher support for democracy and market economy, participation in political organizations is negatively and significantly associated with the same dependent variables. This finding is highly

interesting, since it is in harmony with findings found in western consolidated democracies, where participation in purely choral organization makes one a more democratic citizen, while playing the hard ball game of politics, by volunteering in trade unions or political parties does have the opposite effect. According to Putnam (), the values and skills learned in choral societies are different than the ones learned in political organizations. While the former type of organization emphasizes cooperation and empowerment, the latter focuses on aggressive concept of power and illicit negotiation games. Interestingly, both Protestant and Catholic believers are less supportive of both democracy and privatization in these 4 countries, which is perhaps an indicator of the conservative effect of church.

Table 4 summarizes the findings for the same models in the Baltic countries.

Table 4 effects of social capital on support for democracy and privatization in Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia

Independent variable/dependent variable	Support for democracy	Support for privatization
National identity	.141 ***	.012
Education	.108 ***	.112 ***
Age	-.005	.084 ***
Gender	.013	.080 ***
Income	.144 ***	.224 ***
Political interest	.087 ***	.065 ***
Membership civic associations	.041 *	.025
Membership political associations	.042 *	-.030
Trust	.066 ***	.094 ***
Catholic	-.130 ***	.065 ***
Protestant	.024	-.027
Orthodox	-.016	-.047 **
Rsq/N	.112/2069	.149/2505

*** significant at <=.01, ** significant at <=.05, * significant at <=.1

The results are different than in the previous case. The effect of socio-economic indicators is fairly similar, with age becoming relevant and positively associated

with support for privatization. More interestingly, the effect of national identity is positively associated with more support for democracy in the Baltic countries, thus suggesting an effect according to which in those countries whose national identity was questioned and sometimes removed by foreign powers (in this case the Soviet Union), transition from communism to democracy also represents a transition from a country under foreign domination to an independent and sovereign nation state. Therefore, the results suggest that democratization and constructions of national identity can go hand in hand during the transition process. Another difference from the model analyzing the Central European countries is the fact that participation in any kind of civic or political organization is positively correlated with support for democracy. These results may also be influenced by the simultaneity of democratization and acquiring of independence by the Baltic countries. Nonetheless, the importance of associational participation is not significant in the case of support for privatization, although trust is positively correlated with both dependent variables. Another interesting effect is the negative correlation between Catholicism and support for democracy, and the positive one between Catholicism and support for market economy. This finding makes more sense if two additional contextual factors are taken into consideration. First, the Baltic countries form the most secularized subset of countries, according to the CIA country reports, and also corroborated by historical evidence regarding the highly repressive antireligious effects of the Soviet domination. Nonetheless, the positive significant correlation between Catholicism and support for privatization may be due to the fact that the Catholic Church needs to claim back its property previously confiscated by the communist regime. This finding is also confirmed by the negative significant correlation between Orthodoxy and support for privatization that shows the Orthodox Church's reticence in returning to

the Catholic Church property formerly confiscated by the Soviet regime, and used by the Orthodox Church during 50 years of communism.

Table 5 presents the same models for Romania and Bulgaria. As mentioned before, these two countries are the newest members of the European Union, but usually referred to as the transitioning Eastern European countries that lagged behind their more western neighbors.

Table 5 effects of social capital on support for democracy and privatization in Romania and Bulgaria

Independent variable/dependent variable	Support for democracy	Support for privatization
National identity	-.084 ***	.023
Education	.213 ***	.217 ***
Age	.049 **	.059 **
Gender	.012	.126 ***
Income	.125 ***	.176 ***
Political interest	.132 ***	.083 ***
Membership civic associations	.034	.021
Membership political associations	.002	-.033
Trust	.127 ***	.047 **
Orthodox	-.066 ***	-.030
Muslim	.006	-.039 *
Rsq/N	.189/1713	.192/2060

*** significant at <=.01, ** significant at <=.05, * significant at <=.1

The effect of socio economic indicator is very similar with the Central European countries, and so is the negative impact of national identity on support for democracy, which supports the idea according to which that national identity can be a promoter of democratization in those instances in which the former non-democratic regime also coincided with foreign domination. The variable measuring trust is still positively correlated with both support for democracy and support for privatization, but neither participation in civic association nor participation in political organizations do not affect either dependent variable. The suggested argument here is that in countries that had more democratic experience and a

faster and more successful consolidation, the importance of voluntary associations increased, including their specialized effects that I presented on the case of Central European countries. Nonetheless, in order to qualify this argument, I now turn to analyzing the explanatory power of the models on the former Soviet Republics and Russia.

Table 6 depicts the influence of social capital on support for democracy and privatization in Belarus, Ukraine, Russia and Moldova. The results are very similar with the ones from every other country, with socio-economic indicators being significant and positively associated with the dependent variable. Trust is still positively correlated with both support for democracy and support for privatization, but participation in voluntary associations is not significant in either case. The national identity hypothesis is not confirmed since the pride in one's nationhood is not important in these models, but this lack of significance may be due to the fact that national identity work differently in the 4 different countries, with nationalism being a promoter of democracy in Ukraine (cf. Kuzio) and also its deterrent in Belarus.

Table 6 effects of social capital on support for democracy and privatization in the Russian Federation, Belarus, Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova

Independent variable/dependent variable	Support for democracy	Support for privatization
National identity	-.014	-.001
Education	.186 ***	.132 ***
Age	.178 ***	.190 ***
Gender	.032 *	.081 ***
Income	.010	.122 ***
Political interest	.022	.066 ***
Membership civic associations	-.005	-.022
Membership political associations	.057 ***	.000
Trust	.032 *	.062 ***
Orthodox	.047 ***	-.044 ***
Muslim	-.032 *	-.013
Catholic	.011	-.004
Rsq/N	.102/3350	.138/4213

*** significant at <=.01, ** significant at <=.05, * significant at <=.1

Finally, table 7 presents the models on Albania. Interestingly, if Albania is considered the least democratic of all countries in this data set, then the results are indeed illuminating. While most of the socio economic indicators work in the predicted sense, measures of social capital are either non significant, like it is the case with support for democracy, or, like it is the case of support for privatization, its effect is negative. Probably, the corruption that accompanied most privatization efforts in Albania is responsible for this negative relationship. The lack of relationship between participation in voluntary associations is also part of the idea that further aging and institutionalization of the democratic game may bring about democracy related behaviors, such as the very voluntary involvement.

Table 7 effects of social capital on support for democracy and privatization in Albania

Independent variable/dependent variable	Support for democracy	Support for privatization
National identity	.033	.032
Education	.133 ***	.140 ***
Age	.057 *	.101 ***
Gender	.015	.078 **
Income	.086 ***	.074 **
Political interest	-.100 ***	-.015
Membership civic associations	.029	.009
Membership political associations	.042	.009
Trust	-.015	.025
Orthodox	.085 **	-.070 **
Muslim	.106 **	.093 **
Catholic	.074 **	.075 **
Rsq/N	.054/1089	.068/1145

*** significant at <=.01, ** significant at <=.05, * significant at <=.1

Conclusion

In this paper I analyzed the relationship between social capital and support for democracy in East Central Europe. European Union integration is also a process of democratic consolidation, and acceptance in its structures is a method of

validating one's new democracy as consolidated. Hence, one sees different waves of integration, with Central European countries being accepted earlier than Romania and Bulgaria. In the first part of the paper I showed that indeed the European Union constructs social capital as an importance feature of any democratic society, and, in fact, it operationalized the concept through its regional policy. Nevertheless, I argue that the European Union has a rather rigid understanding of social capital, rewarding communities that benefit from it, but not attempting to influence it through institutional involvement.

Therefore, in the second part of the paper I analyzed the relationship between social capital, measured as trust and voluntary work in civic and political organizations, in different subsets of Central and Eastern European countries. The conclusion is that while trust is positively associated with both support for procedural democracy and market economy all over East Central Europe, the relationship between involvement in organizations and the same dependent variables is not that clear. While involvement in civic organization is a predictor of support for democracy in the more consolidated democracies of Central Europe, it does not play any role in less consolidated systems. Furthermore, in the same subset of consolidated democracies, involvement in political organizations is negatively associated with support for democracy, confirming Putnam's argument regarding types of organizations and their effect on social capital. In transitioning countries involvement in any kind of organization is positively associated with support for democracy, suggesting a less developed institutionalization of the political body, still very much anchored in the realities of the non-free past governments. The tentative suggestion at the end of this study is that institutionalization of democracy is a way of strengthening the relationship between social capital and support for democracy.

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Appendix A

Dependent variables – index construction

Support for procedural democracy

1. Communism (initial E112 – rate political system as it was before – communism – scale 1-10, form very bad to very good). Now 0-9, 0 means very good, 9 very bad.
2. Leader (initial E114 – political system – having a strong leader, 4 categories, 1-4, 1 very good, 4 very bad). Now 0-3, 0 means it is very good to have a strong leader, 3 it is very bad.
3. Techno (initial E115 – political system – having experts make decisions, 4 categories, 1-4, 1 very good, 4 very bad). Now 0-3, 0 means very bad, 3 means very good.
4. Army (initial E116 – political system – having the army rule, 4 categories, 1-4, 1 very good, 4 very bad). Now 0-3, 0 means very good, 3 means very bad.
5. Dem_sys (initial E117 – political system – having a democratic political system, 4 categories, 1-4, 1 very good, 4 very bad. Now 0-3, 0 means very bad, 3 means very good.
6. Dem_inde (initial E121 – democracies are too indecisive and have too much squabbling – 4 categories, 1-4, 1 agree strongly, 4 strongly disagree). Now 0-3, 0 means agree strongly, 3 means strongly disagree.
7. Dem_ord (initial E122 – democracies are not good at maintaining order - 4 categories, 1-4, 1 agree strongly, 4 strongly disagree). Now 0-3, 0 means agree strongly, 3 means strongly disagree.
8. Dem_bet (initial E123 – democracy may have problems but it is better than any other forms of government, 4 categories, 1-4, 1 agree strongly, 4 strongly disagree). Now 0-3, 0 means strongly disagree, 3 means agree strongly.

The components of the factor have been added up with equal weights.

Support for market economy

1. Pr_own (initial E036 – private vs. state ownership of business – scale from 1-10, where 1 means private ownership should be increased and 10 government ownership should be increased). Now 0-9, where 0 means government ownership should be increased, and 9 means private ownership should be increased.
2. Ind_res (initial E037 – government responsibility – scale from 1-10, where 1 means people should take more responsibility, and 10 the government should take more responsibility). Now 0-9, where 0 means more government responsibility, and 9 means more individual responsibility.
3. Compet (initial E039 – competition good or harmful – scale form 1-10, where 1 means economic competition is good, and 10 competition is harmful). Now 0-9, where 0 means competition harmful, and 9 competition good.
4. Firm_fr (initial E042 – firms and freedom – scale form 1-10, where 1 means state should give more freedom to firms, and 10 state should control firms more effectively). Now 0-9 where 0 means more state control, and 9 means more firm freedom.

The components of the factor have been added up with equal weights.

Independent variables – index construction

Demographics

1. Sex (initial X001), 1 male, 0 female.
2. Age_rec1 (initial X003r, ordinal). Now 4 categories 0-3, 3 means 15-34, 2 means 35-54, 1 means 55-64, 0 means 65 and older.
3. Edu_rec (initial x025, education, ordinal). Now 4 categories, 0-3, 0 means up to complete elementary, 1 means

up to complete secondary, 2 means high school, 3 some university or university degree.

4. Income (initial X047, scale of income, ordinal, World Value Surveys coded for every country in national currency). Now 10 categories, 0-9, 0 low, 9 high.

5. Resid (initial X049, size of town, ordinal). Now 5 categories, 0 means smaller than 10000, 1 means between 10000-50000, 2 means 50000-100000, 3 means 100000-500000, 4 means more than 500000.

Political interest

1. Pol_dis (initial A062, political discussion, ordinal, 3 values, 1 frequently, 2 occasionally, 3 never). Now, 3 categories, 2 means frequently, and 0 never.

2. Pol_news (initial E150, how often following politics in the news, ordinal, 5 categories, 1 every day, 2 several times/week, 3 1-2/week, less often, 5 never). Now 5 categories, 0-4, o means never, 4 means every day.

3. Pol_int (initial E023, interest in politics, ordinal, 4 categories, 1 very interested, 2 somewhat interested, 3 not very interested, 4 not at all interested). Now 4 categories, 0-3, 0 means not at all, 3 means very interested.

The components of the factor have been added up with equal weights.

National identity

1. Nation (initial G006, how proud of nationality, ordinal, 1 very proud, 2 quite proud, 3 not very proud, 4 not at all proud). Now, 4 categories, 0 not at all proud, 3 very proud.

Civic engagement

Membership in associations (except religious), dichotomous, 0 not mentioned, 1 belong

1. Assoc_ed (initial A066)
2. Labourun (initial A067)

3. Pol_part (initial A068)
4. Profasso (initial A072)
5. Sports (initial A074)
6. Youth (initial A073)
7. Women (initial A074)
8. Other_gr (initial A079)
9. None (initial A080)

The components of the factor have been added up with equal weights.

Political engagement

Voluntary work – unpaid time (except religious), dichotomous, 0 not mentioned, 1 belong
1. Volun_ed (initial A083)
2. Vol_unio (initial A084)
3. Vol_par (initial A085)
4. Vol_prof (initial A089)
5. Vol_yout (initial A090)
6. Vol_spor (initial A091)
7. Vol_wom (initial A092)
8. Vol_oth (initial A096)
9. Vol_none (initial A097)

The components of the factor have been added up with equal weights.

Freedom House scores

FHD is a composite index including all of the below indexes.

Civil Society. Assesses the growth of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), their organizational capacity and financial sustainability, and the legal and political environment in which they function; the development of free trade unions; and interest group participation in the policy process.

Independent Media. Addresses the current state of press freedom, including libel laws, harassment of journalists, editorial independence, the emergence of a financially viable private press, and Internet access for private citizens.

Local Democratic Governance. Considers the decentralization of power; the responsibilities, election, and capacity of local governmental bodies; and the transparency and accountability of local authorities.

Judicial Framework and Independence. Highlights constitutional reform, human rights protections, criminal code reform, judicial independence, the status of ethnic minority rights, guarantees of equality before the law, treatment of suspects and prisoners, and compliance with judicial decisions.

Corruption. Looks at public perceptions of corruption, the business interests of top policy makers, laws on financial disclosure and conflict of interest, and the efficacy of anticorruption initiatives.

Democratization Score
1-2 Consolidated Democracy
   3 Semi-consolidated Democracy
   4 Transitional Government or Hybrid Regime
   5 Semi-consolidated Authoritarian Regime
6-7 Consolidated Authoritarian Regime