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Contents

ON THE RIGHT TRACK!?	4
CONCEPTUALISING DEMOCRACY WITHIN THE POST-SOVIET SETTING: A TYPOLOGY OF POLITICAL REGIME FORMS	5
Jørgen Møller	
THE STATE OF DEMOCRACY IN ADVANCED INDUSTRIALISED SOCIETIES – A SOCIOLOGICAL APPROACH	20
Jesper Lysgaard	
INSTITUTIONAL TRUST IN THE CONTEXT OF POST-COMMUNIST DEMOCRATIC CONSOLIDATION	36
Todor Arpad	
TRUST, CONFIDENCE AND SOCIAL CAPITAL IN THE DEMOCRA- TIZATION PROCESS OF EASTERN COUNTRIES	52
Vincenzo Memoli	
SOCIETAL ACCOUNTABILITY AND DEMOCRATIZATION IN THE PHILIPPINES	71
Aries A. Arugay	

On the right track!?

The International Association for Political Science Students has made an enormous progress in the past few years. Not only the establishment of the permanent seat, which is proving to be an important organizational improvement already after few months of its work, but also the escalation of the Association's events and projects in number and quality. We can confidently say that IAPSS is starting to emerge as one of the visible contributors to the broader scope of political science. It is no doubt that POLITIKON – The IAPSS Journal of Political Science has been one of the strong pillars of the IAPSS success story.

Looking almost two years back, when I was writing the editorial to the 6th issue, many things have changed prospectively. Peer reviewing was introduced, the editorial board finally started to function, the number of contributions has risen and so did the number of issues printed. And the story does not end here – POLITIKON finally became a real periodical publication, issued twice a year in April and October without doubt and fear as in the past. It is common sense nowadays that there will be two printed issues of POLITIKON available per year which is a great achievement. For this we thank all the people that made this possible!

However, the success should not bring the further development prospects of POLITIKON to a halt! After the "pilot period" of the Journal and after the question "POLITIKON – yes or no?" being answered positively by no doubt, further steps have to be taken. How to make the Journal self-sustainable, how to attract even more potential contributors, how to make it widely read and distributed or accessible around the world? It is important at this point to bring POLITIKON closer to those for whom it was originally meant to exist – to political science students around the globe. Since it is too naïve to expect that we will be able to provide a copy for every individual political science student in the world, we should with greater attention resort to the public means at disposal for the knowledge distribution – libraries and the internet. POLITIKON is available online from the outset, however not yet in enough libraries worldwide. Furthermore, no subscription service is yet established.

These are only few remarks for the future, which will, I believe, continuously prove that the work invested in the Journal so far was for sure not meaningless and that we are on the right track! In the meantime enjoy reading the present issue of POLITIKON which is partially also the outcome of IAPSS's successful cooperation with the International Political Science Association (IPSA), hard work of the Editorial Board and, of course, research of the contributors. The 9th issue of POLITIKON 'Is Democracy Working?' is therefore ready to be assessed by you. Enjoy reading!

Matija Kovač

Chairperson - International Association for Political Science Students

*Conceptualising democracy within the post-Soviet setting:
A typology of political regime forms*

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ABSTRACT: As regards the democratic potential of the former Soviet states, the scholarly community was divided into an optimistic and a pessimistic camp when communism broke down in 1989-1991. Almost one-and-a-half decade later, neither of these camps' predictions have been confirmed. Instead, hybrid regimes – combining pluralistic and authoritarian traits – have seized the day in the post-Soviet realms. The study of regime change has had a hard time grasping this political phenomenon conceptually. In order to pave the way for empirical research, it is necessary to deal a new deck of cards, to revisit the definitions of democracy with the actual transition processes in mind. The present paper aims to do precisely this. Emphasising both the electoral and the liberal component of democracy, with assistance from classic and contemporary authors, the paper arrives at a fourfold typology of the political regime form. This typology, and the conceptualisation it rests on, is logically exhaustive and able to set dissimilar countries apart. Hence, it provides a useful point of departure for elucidating the post-Soviet transition processes empirically

The reality of post-Soviet transition processes

Today, we are witnessing it in the Ukraine. Yesterday, we saw it in Georgia. Tomorrow, we may encounter it in Moldova. Quite a number of the former Soviet republics are caught somewhere between autocracy and democracy, mixing pluralistic traits with authoritarian ones. This was not what the scholarly community, and in particular the study of regime change, expected one and a half decades ago, when communism collapsed. Then, two conflicting voices were heard. From one corner of the ring, the optimists predicted the coming of a glorious democratic future. Francis Fukuyama's (1992) (in)famous thesis on *The End of History and the Last Man* captured most headlines. Yet the optimism was not confined to his, deliberately provoking view. The so-called school of Transitology may at heart have had low expectations (see, e.g., O'Donnell & Schmitter, 1986) but it also stressed that at the end of the day, it was only the actors' choices that were of vital

importance (Nodia, 1996: 20); what Diamond (1999: 193) has subsequently termed "...the thesis of the causal primacy of political factors". This led many to adopt a comforting message 'that when it comes to democracy, everybody can do it'.

Staunchly opposed to this view, the pessimists argued that the past of these countries, and the communist legacy in particular, more or less ruled out a steady movement towards liberal democracy (see, e.g., Jowitt, 1992). From the mid-1990s, Samuel P. Huntington's (1996) thesis on *The Clash of Civilisations* took this point to its logical extreme, claiming that a fundamental gap separated most of the former Soviet countries from the West – and, by extension, from liberal democracy.

Bunce (1999: 758) has captured the identified dichotomy eloquently:

"Thus, there were those whose scenario for post socialism was gloomy, with images of disarray, despair, and despots as the 'civilizations' of liberalism and state

socialism clashed with one another. The picture that emerged in other investigations was a rosy one, however. Here, the argument was either that certain elements of the socialist past were helpful to a liberal outcome, or that the socialist past, while illiberal, had been decisively defeated. In either event, the premise, if not the promise, was that eastern Europe was well positioned to become precisely that: the eastern half of Europe.”

Five years into the twenty-first century, the reality of the post-Soviet transitions has not conformed to any of these views. Instead, what has been termed ‘hybrid regimes’ (see Diamond, 2002) have come into existence, neither closing rank with the liberal democracies nor drifting toward their authoritarian pasts. Interestingly, though mixed, these novel political regime forms seem to have a lot of intrinsic stability (see, e.g. Carothers, 2002).

The present paper sets out to develop a typology of political regime forms that is capable of capturing this unexpected political occurrence. The dependent variable that needs to be conceptualised is thus the variants of political regime forms found in the post-Soviet setting.

Seeking to elucidate the different political paths within the former Soviet avenue promises a very fruitful point of departure for comparative work. Quoting Fish (1998: 214) on the entire edifice of former communist countries, “...this region furnishes an exceptionally promising laboratory for assessing which factors facilitate – or at least accompany – democratization and which do not”. This is so because

these countries, 28 in all, were engaged in a political-cum-economic transition, or at the very least an upheaval, at approximately the same time, namely 1989-1992. In addition, the countries are strikingly different in everything from socio-economic development over ethnolinguistic composition to chosen strategies of reform. In other words, the setting contains the optimal combination of similarities and differences for engaging in comparative endeavours (see Bunce, 1995). Needless to say, this is even more the case when confining the scope to the 15 Soviet fellow travellers as is done in the present paper.

Why conceptualise?

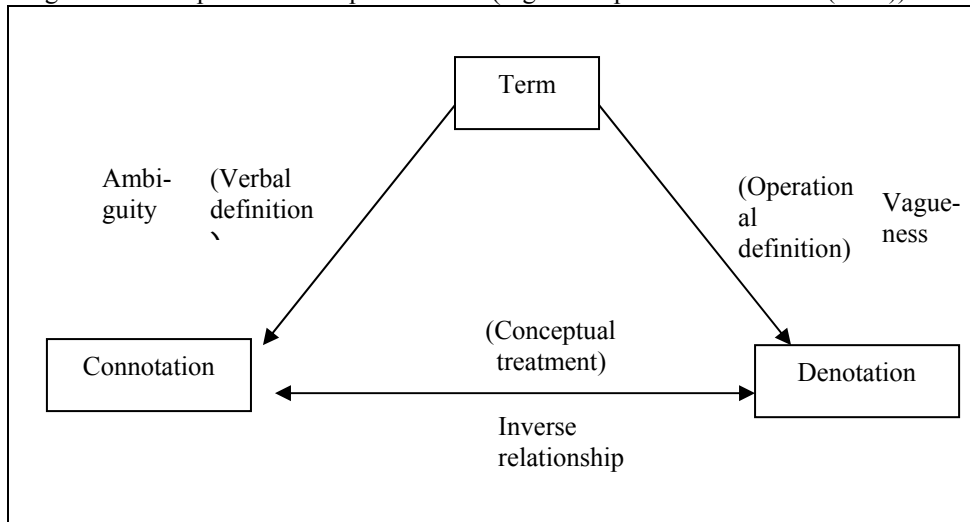
“In a very crucial sense there is no methodology without logos, without thinking about thinking”. Thus asserts Giovanni Sartori (1933) in his classic article on conceptualisation, published in *The American Political Science Review* in 1970. Sartori’s point is straightforward: before we can even think about measurement – in order to validate or falsify a given causal claim – we must solve the logical problems of conceptualisation.

Quoting Gerring (1999: 357-358),

“‘Concept formation’ conventionally refers to three aspects of a concept: (a) the events or phenomena to be defined (the extension, denotation, or definiendum), (b) the properties or attributes that define them (the intension, connotation, definiens, or definition), and (c) a label covering both *a* and *b* (the term)”.

These three aspects are illustrated in figure 1.

Figure 1: The aspects of concept formation (Figure adapted from Bartolini (2004))



How to conceptualise?

Few voices of dissent exist on the subject of why to conceptualise. However, the opinions differ when it comes to the ‘how to’ question. Sartori (1970, 1984) champions a very rigorous approach, in which he observes a number of rules. His (1970:1041) focal point is the so-called ‘ladder of abstraction’: “We make a concept more abstract and more general by lessening its properties or attributes. Conversely, a concept is specified by the addition (or unfolding) of qualifications, i.e., by augmenting its attributes or properties”. To solve the corresponding problems, Sartori (1984) proposes ten rules for concept formation.

One best way?

Sartori has subsequently been criticised for his uncompromising attitude to the rigour of concept formation. Gerring (1999) has pointed out that such a scheme sets up a straightjacket, hindering good scholarship. This is so because concept formation is an uncertain process, riven by choices, or trade-offs, to use his term. It is, in his opinion, a struggle between eight competing considerations, these be-

ing familiarity, resonance, parsimony, coherence, differentiation, depth, theoretical utility and field utility. “Concept formation is a fraught exercise – a set of choices which may have no single ‘best’ solution, but rather a range of more-or-less acceptable alternatives” (Gerring, 1999: 367).

What Gerring emphasises is that the relevance of a concept hinges on the particular research project. That is, it is pretentious – and flawed – to seek to provide the ultimate clarification, valid through space and time, of a given concept. Instead, Gerring advocates, the scholar should reveal all his interim considerations and make the process of concept formation transparent. “Writers have an obligation to state explicitly why (on the basis of which criteria) certain properties and terms were chosen, or excluded” (Gerring, 1999: 391). To paraphrase, the validity of the definitions depends in the last instance on whether it is possible to understand the researcher’s goals and the way these are produced.

Gerring’s criticism of Sartori’s scheme makes sense. However, his eight guidelines for concept formation are them-

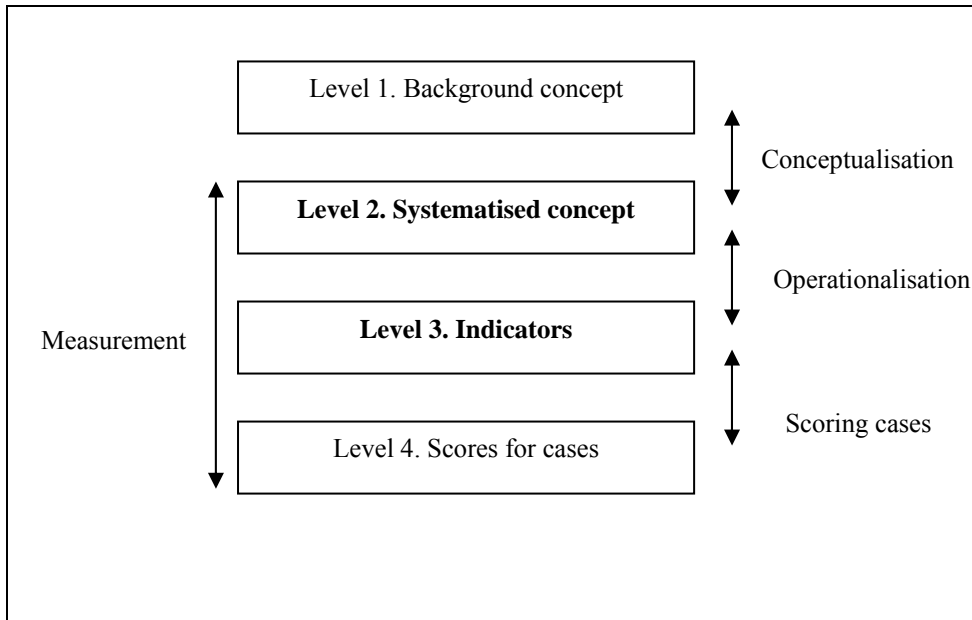
selves fraught – as a body. For the present purposes, the multiple controlling necessary in such a process of multiple trade-offs leaves the analytical quest in an unnecessary state of flux. Hence, I opt for Sartori’s model of layered concept formation or levels of abstraction. That said, the subsequent definitional endeavours will not follow Sartori in an overly rigorous way. What does this mean in practice? Firstly, the idea of the ladder of abstraction will be the focal point whereas Sartori’s various rules will not be observed in any systematic way. Secondly, I will keep in mind Gerring’s emphasis on the boundedness linking the definitions to the actual

field of research, in this case the post-Soviet transitions. Or in the words of Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias (1997: 31): “Conceptual definitions are neither true nor false....concepts are symbols that permit communication. Conceptual definitions are either useful for communication or research, or they are not”.

Layered concept formation

Sartori distinguishes between three levels of abstraction: the high level, the medium level and the low level (1970: 1041). In more recent times, Adcock & Collier (2001) have elaborated on this ladder, dividing it into four levels as illustrated in figure 2.

Figure 2: Levels of conceptualisation and measurement - Figure adapted from Adcock & Collier (2001)



Using this ladder in a coherent way ensures that the observations (level 4) meaningfully capture the ideas contained in the concepts (level 1 and level 2). The most abstract – or general, as Adcock & Collier prefer to term it – level is that of the

background concept. This is a playground where little disagreement exists because the concept carries almost nothing with regard to negation, i.e. what it is not. Descending the ladder, we move down to the level of the systematised concept. Here,

the researcher is compelled to take a stand, to specify what the connotation of the concept is not capturing. Hereafter, we reach the levels of the indicators, that is, the operationalisation of the concept. At this point, we must declare the denotation of the concept and present a way to measure this. To borrow again from Sartori (1970: 1045), “The definitional requirement for a concept is that the *meaning* is declared, while operational definitions are required to state the conditions, indeed the operations, by means of which a concept can be verified and, ultimately, measured”.

Some definitions of democracy in the literature

Defining democracy from scratch would be a bold quest, and it would also be a foolish one. A plethora of definitions already exist within the literature, definitions that are impossible to escape as a theoretical frame of reference. The logical point of departure for the subsequent conceptual endeavours is, thus, to present an overview, and a discussion, of these competing definitions. Starting with the most modest connotation, I will in turn discuss the advantages of moving (or not moving) towards ‘thicker’ definitions.

Democracy as an electoral engine

“Democracy is a political *method*, that is to say, a certain type of institutional arrangement for arriving at political – legislative and administrative – decisions and hence incapable of being an end in itself, irrespective of what decisions it will produce under given historical conditions. And this must be the starting point of any attempt at defining it.”

Thus asserts Joseph A. Schumpeter (1974: 242) in *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy*, originally published during the Second World War. This leads him to the following definition: “...the democratic method is that institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for peo-

ple’s vote” (269), the free competition for the free vote, that is.

Elections have often been the cardinal point in definitions of democracy, Schumpeter’s is merely the most influential of these. The electoral strand within the theoretical literature simply argues that free contestation for political leadership is what, at the end of the day, separates autocracies and democracies.

This ‘procedural’ definition has had an impressive longevity. In 1991, Huntington employed it in his influential *The Third Wave. Democratization in the late Twentieth Century*. According to his interpretation, democracy has two dimensions: contestation and participation. To quote, “Democracy is consolidated to the extent these in-system responses become institutionalised” (266), i.e. when the regime form passes the so-called ‘two-turnover test’, two alternations in government as the consequence of free and fair elections.

In the latest decade, electoral definitions have mostly been linked to quantitative research on the requisites of democracy (see, e.g., Przeworski, Alvarez, Cheibub & Limongi, 1996). The reason is straightforward. The Schumpeterian definition lends a helping hand when seeking to classify a large number of countries in a uniform way. The electoral emphasis remains attractive exactly due to its limited connotation. It is a concept that is very much amenable to empirical research.

Viewing democracy as an electoral engine may facilitate empirical endeavours yet it is not unproblematic. To quote Diamond (1999: 9), “...such formulations may still fail to give due weight to political repression and marginalization, which exclude significant segments of the population – typically the poor or ethnic and regional minorities – from exercising their democratic rights”; thus painting too flattering a picture of the democratic merits of the countries scrutinized.

This problem – what Terry Karl has termed ‘the electoral fallacy’ – is espe-

cially serious in the current empirical context where many countries are able to pass as democratic when employing an electoral definition yet not when further requirements are put forward (see Diamond 1999: 10). With such a modest connotation, the denotation covers a very large cluster of countries that have very little in common in substantial matters. Hence, it makes sense to expand the connotation of the concept of democracy. Fortunately, the marketplace of ideas is full of such offers.

Before we take a look at some of these, one thing should be made clear. It is possible to stay in Schumpeter's vein of thinking, i.e. to keep his interpretation of democracy as a method, while expanding the connotation of the term. Like pearls on a string, we thus keep *the* one necklace yet add new content to it. This is obviously only possible for so long, since, at some point, we will in fact be toying with

Figure 3: Dahls seven criteria for Polyarchy

1. Elected officials.	Control over government decisions about policy is constitutionally vested in elected officials.
2. Free and fair elections.	Elected officials are chosen in the frequent and fairly conducted elections in which coercion is comparatively uncommon.
3. Inclusive suffrage.	Practically all adults have the right to vote in the election of officials.
4. Right to run for office.	Practically all adults have the right to run for elective offices in the government, though age limits may be higher for holding office than for the suffrage.
5. Freedom of expression.	Citizens have a right to express themselves without the danger of severe punishment on political matters broadly defined, including criticism of officials, the government, the regime, the socio-economic order, and the prevailing ideology.
6. Alternative information.	Citizens have a right to seek out alternative sources of information. Moreover, alternative sources of information exist and are protected by laws.
7. Associational autonomy.	To achieve their various rights, including those listed above, citizens also have a right to form relatively independent associations or organizations, including independent political parties and interest groups.

another kind of jewellery – and hence a different necklace. This cut-off point should not go unnoticed.

The seminal notion of 'Polyarchy'

The most influential elaboration of the Schumpeterian definition dates back to 1971 – revisited in 1989 – when Robert A. Dahl conceived his concept of *Polyarchy*, crafted as an empirical approximation of the ideal notion of democracy. To quote Dahl (1989: 220),

“Polyarchy is a political order distinguished at the most general level by two broad characteristics: Citizenship is extended to a relatively high proportion of adults and the rights of citizenship include the opportunity to oppose and vote out the highest officials in the government”.

To spell it out, Dahl divides this definition into seven criteria; any political regime form capable of fulfilling these earning the status of polyarchy:

Dahl's definition has many merits, adding liberal components to the electoral ones as it does. However, it also suffers from some of the same problems as its Schumpeterian predecessor. Dahl, too, emphasises the procedural aspects in themselves, while neglecting the capacity to uphold these procedures. To be fair, he (1989: 221) asserts that:

"It is important to understand that these statements characterize actual and not merely nominal rights, institutions, and processes. In fact, the countries of the world may be assigned approximate rankings according to the extent to which each of the institutions is present in a realistic sense."

However, he does not include this requirement directly into his list of criteria – it remains a background condition, hence leaving it to the empirical investigation. If this was in itself sufficient, he might just as well have defined polyarchy as a regime form where both electoral and liberal rights are respected, without spelling it out into seven requirements. The criterion of the rights being actual rather than nominal thus remains stipulated.

Before I elaborate on this criticism theoretically, I will briefly touch upon the empirical problems that derives from adhering so strenuously to a procedural view only. The concept of polyarchy was well-suited to distinguishing between the emerging democracies at the time of its conception and in the subsequent two decades, i.e. in the 1970s and 1980s – a period when the global dominance of democracy was still trembling in the balance. However, as Diamond (e.g. 1999) has repeatedly pointed out, the present wave of democracy, boosted by the dominant liberal paradigm, is unique in two respects. One is its extensive scope, engulfing much of the globe as it does. The other is its intrinsic shallowness, something that cannot be appreciated by Dahl's procedural definition, as the flaws lie in

the actual workings of the democratic institutions.

In a nutshell, Dahl's criteria are in themselves unable to set dissimilar countries apart in the chosen post-Soviet setting. Once again we encounter a need to elaborate on the connotation. As stated, the problem is that Dahl does not explicitly spell out the point about the rights being actual; he does not add a requirement concerning the effective function of the democratic institutions to the list. This indicates that we should expand the connotation on this very point.

Bringing the state back in

It seems appropriate to lend Dahl a final word before departing from his definition of polyarchy. In his book from 1989 *Democracy and Its Critics*, he (216) rightly makes the following observation:

"The point of this thumbnail history is to emphasize that movements to democratise the governments of national states in Europe and America did not begin with a tabula rasa. In the countries that were the main centres of successful democratization from the end of the eighteenth century until 1920, legislatures, systems of representation, and even elections were already familiar institutions"

This is indeed the case but one more things ought to be stressed: the character of the state apparatus. "Historically, liberty – secured through constitutional, limited government and a rule of law – came about before democracy both in England and, in varying degrees, in other European states" as Diamond (1999: 4) points out.

Dahl spends little time on the fact that the liberal state came into being before democracy in Western Europe. He is, after all, preoccupied with the representative aspect, not the character of the state. To reiterate, Dahl formed his thoughts concerning democracy – as did Schumpeter – in a time and setting where the representative, or procedural, aspect did indeed set countries apart. However, this is less the case today. To quote Zakaria (2003: 17),

“Over the last half-century in the West, democracy and liberty have merged. But today the two strands of liberal democracy, interwoven in the Western political fabric, are coming apart across the globe. Democracy is flourishing, liberty is not”.

This is, albeit with a different emphasis, exactly the same observation as I have earlier borrowed from Diamond: that the ways of electoral and liberal democracy are parting these days. To capture these political dynamics we are in need of a more state-centred approach – only thus can we truly appreciate the liberal component of democracy. This is not least the case within the chosen post-Soviet setting where liberal state capacity, and in particular the rule of law, was, at best, stipulated after the breakdown of communism (see, e.g., Bruszt, 2002).

What we need at this point is some thorough theorising about the state and democracy. Or, to be more precise, the judicial element of the state. As Diamond (1999: 11-12) rightly tells us:

“Freedom and pluralism, in turn, can be secured only through a ‘rule of law’, in which legal rules are applied fairly, consistently, and predictably across equivalent cases, irrespective of the class, status, or power of those subject to the rules... This in turn requires a legal and judicial system and, more broadly, a state with some capacity. Thus Juan Linz’s dictum: “no state, no *Rechtsstaat*, no democracy”.

Before we proceed any further, it is necessary to go back to Schumpeter’s original definition for a moment. One of his main points stands in stark contrast to the one about to be made here. “We have seen that the democratic method does not necessarily guarantee a greater amount of individual freedom than another political method would permit in similar circumstances”, he points out (1974: 271). To illustrate this, he (1974: 243) delivers a quasi-historical example in the footnotes: “...Witness the most famous of all trials.

Pilate was, from the standpoint of the Jews, certainly the representative of autocracy. Yet he tried to protect freedom. And he yielded to a democracy.”

This quotation vividly demonstrates that Schumpeter thinks of democracy only in popular terms, not in terms of a liberal state. This has a curious implication. Not surprisingly, he does stress the importance of having a usable state for the stability of democracy. However, instead of making it part of the dependent variable, he transforms it into an independent one; and he (1974: 293) writes:

“As a third condition, democratic government in modern industrial society must be able to command, for all purposes the sphere of public activity is to include – no matter whether this be much or little – the services of a well-trained bureaucracy of good standing and tradition, endowed with a strong sense of duty and a no less strong *esprit de corps*.”

This quotation pinpoints the difference between the Schumpeterian definition and that of his successors. Today, while still defining democracy as a political method it is most often perceived as a method that safeguards liberty from arbitrary actions, be they conceived by the state or by other citizens. Hence, what to Schumpeter is an independent variable of stable democracy has become part of the dependent variable itself. This brings us to the next stop on our theoretical journey: Guillermo O’Donnell. In 1993, O’Donnell published a working paper titled *On the State, Democratization and Some Conceptual Problems*. His (1993: 11-12) point of departure is an observation akin to those quoted previously, namely that “...in many areas the *democratic*, participatory rights of polyarchy are respected. But the *liberal* component of democracy is systematically violated”. On this background, O’Donnell (1993: 10) invites us to remember the most critical aspect of a genuinely liberal state: the existence of a universalistic legal order, one that “...can

be successfully invoked by anyone, irrespective of her position in society". The rule of law, in its classical liberal interpretation, is the criterion that needs to be added to Dahl's concept of polyarchy in order to arrive at a fuller coverage of what is most properly termed *liberal democracy*.

Note that by adding the rule of law to the Dahlian list of criteria we have not departed from the Schumpeterian idea of democracy as a method. We have merely underlined that, as a method, it must be able to ensure that the collective decisions are implemented according to the constitutional rules – thus defending the citizens against legal arbitrariness.

Considering the attitudes

Having added this pearl to the necklace, should we proceed further, enriching the connotation even more? A number of oft-cited scholars have in fact done so. In their tour de force through *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation*, published in 1996, Juan Linz and Alfred Stepan (5-7) define consolidated democracy as a political situation in which democracy has become 'the only game in town' – behaviourally, attitudinally and constitutionally.

Having stressed the need for democratic procedures and for a state capable of making these effective, we have already covered the behavioural and the constitutional dimensions, respectively. However, we have so far stopped short of any 'attitudinal requirements'. What is it, more precisely, that Linz & Stepan advertise for? One quotation suffices to shed light on this (1996: 5),

"Attitudinally, democracy becomes the game in town when, even in the face of severe political and economic crises, the overwhelming majority of the people believe that any further political change must emerge from within the parameters of democratic formulas".

This requirement is problematic empirically as well as theoretically, however. To

start with the empirical issue, within the post-Soviet avenue, hardships of socio-economic character have been ubiquitous since the first step onto the democratic path one-and-a-half decades ago. In many of the countries in question, the economic output has decreased by between one third and one half compared to the pre-independence level (see The World Bank's World Development Indicators). In such circumstances, one can hardly expect the population to remain sanguine concerning the transition process in general. A lack of faith in democracy may represent nothing more than a general feeling of loss. Hence, the attitudinal dimension may cover something other than the loyalty to democracy – there may, so to say, be a validity problem in applying it empirically.

As regards the theoretical issue, the attitudinal component is not really complementary to the criteria discussed in the preceding sections. Adding attitudes does not represent an elaboration of the understanding of democracy as a method, or as a political regime form; it represents an entirely new theoretical track. Travelling down this path is not desirable – as Schumpeter rightly pointed out more than 60 years ago, and it is a subject that is today best treated in the so-called Quality of Democracy-discussion (see Diamond & Morlino, 2004).

The same objections apply to the close relative of the attitudinal component, the focus on civil society. The most important contemporary author espousing the 'civil view' is Robert Putnam (1993, 2000). One quotation effectively elucidates his (2000: 336) claim:

"That democratic self-government requires an actively engaged citizenry has been a truism for centuries. (Not until the middle of the twentieth century did some political theorists begin to assert that good citizenship requires simply choosing among competing teams of politicians at

the ballot box, as one might choose among competing brands of toothpaste)". Once again, the requirement is too elusive empirically and covers a different aspect theoretically. As for the chosen setting, it is hard to imagine that a viable civil society can be established overnight, not least in a situation of socio-economic aridity. Theoretically, what it is important to emphasise is the extent to which the state secures a free-space for such organisational activity (and through Dahl and O'Donnell we have already covered that aspect). Again, what matters is the presence of what may be termed a *liberal state*, not the extent to which people actually engage in independent organisational activities.

Having completed this theoretical excursion, and having made the case for an extended version of Dahl's notion of polyarchy as the best theoretical way to capture liberal democracy, it is time to spell out the conceptual definitions of democracy. This is the purpose of the remaining part of the paper.

Conceptualising democracy

We now turn away from the broad theoretical discussion and towards the actual conceptualisation bearing the former points in mind. In the subsequent pages, the aim is to descend the ladder of abstraction sketched earlier, in turn elucidating the connotative and denotative definitions of democracy, i.e. of the dependent variable of this research project.

The background concept

Tackling the level of the background concept should not cause much confusion. Little disagreement exists with regard to this the most abstract definition of democracy. Quoting Diamond (1999:8).

"By and large, most scholarly and policy uses of the term *democracy* today refer to a purely political conception of the term, and the intellectual shift back to an earlier convention has greatly facilitated progress in studying the dynamics of democracy, including the relationship between politi-

cal democracy and various social and economic conditions".

Both of these propositions seem sound to me. Firstly, defining democracy as a *political regime form* is in line with the tradition of viewing it as a method going back to Schumpeter. Secondly, even on the most abstract level this connotative definition paves the way for analysing the importance of socio-economic factors as independent variables of democracy, something that is obviously not possible when these are included directly into the dependent variable. We do not, so to say, risk confusing apples and pears.

We still have a long way to travel conceptually, though. At the present stage, our problem is the very tangible one that democracy is logically only one value along the variable of political regime form. Hence, we need to spell out what democracy, as a political regime form, *is and is not* in detail, also as regards the connotative definition. This forces us to move to the level of the systematized concepts.

The systematised concept

Reviewing 150 recent articles on the subject, Collier & Levitsky (1997) identify a conceptual mess including more than 550 subtypes of democracy. This confusion is situated on the level of systematised concept. That is, the many subtypes – or 'democracy with adjectives' as Collier & Levitsky call them – differ from each other on the connotation, "...on the range and extent of political properties encompassed by democracy", as Diamond (1999: 8) puts it.

On the background of this plethora of offers, Collier & Levitsky (1997: 450-451) issue a warning against participating in the outbidding of 'democracy with adjectives', i.e. to conceptualise novel ideal types meant to capture the 'mixed' character of post-authoritarian regimes. I will pay due consideration to this timely note and stay within the conceptual mainstream, paying attention to concepts such as autocracy, electoral democracy, illib-

eral democracy, and liberal democracy (see, e.g., Diamond, 1999).

With the theoretical discussion of the preceding sections in mind, I have thus far advocated an understanding of liberal democracy that has three requirements: the first is fulfilled by Schumpeter's electoral criterion, the second by the Dahl's criteria concerning free expression and associational autonomy, and the third by O'Donnell's criterion of the presence of a liberal state upholding the rule of law.

One thing is immediately clear: not all countries within the post-Soviet setting will be able to pass this threshold. In fact, my tentative expectation is that most will fall short. In order to capture the dependent variable, we must allow for variation with regard to the political regime form, to specify the various theoretical values on that particular variable. What logically follows from the criteria put forward is that I have conceptualised the political regime form as having two dimensions:

Figure 4: A typology of political regime forms

		Liberal component	
		+ Liberal state	% Liberal state
Electoral component	+ Electoral democracy	Liberal democracy	Illiberal democracy
	% Electoral democracy	Liberal autocracy	Illiberal autocracy

Thus, we have developed a theoretically sound analytical scheme that exhausts the background concept, spells out the possible variants in a systematic manner, and, hence, covers the dependent variable that the paper set out to elucidate, that is, the possible political regime form in post-Soviet countries. The last thing remaining on this level is to specify the connotative definitions of these four types:

1) Liberal democracy is a political regime form that combines the presence

of one electoral and one liberal. This is the connotative space that I am covering at the level of the systematised concept. Hence, I have arrived at a twofold classification.

The first concerns the electoral component of democracy. Here, a country may either be classified as an electoral democracy or not. To elaborate, either the country fulfils the Schumpeterian criterion of free and fair elections for political leadership or it does not. The second concerns the liberal component. Here, a country may be classified either as having a liberal state or not. To elaborate, either the state apparatus is able to uphold the liberal rights through a rule of law or it is not able to do so.

When fusing these classifications we arrive at a typology covering the political regime form as illustrated in figure 4.

of i) free electoral competition for political leadership with ii) the presence of a liberal state able to uphold the rule of law.

2) Illiberal democracy is a political regime form that combines the presence of i) free electoral competition for political leadership with ii) the absence of a liberal state able to uphold the rule of law.

3) Liberal autocracy is a political regime form that combines the absence of i) free electoral competition for political

leadership with ii) the presence of a liberal state able to uphold the rule of law.

4) Illiberal autocracy is a political regime form that combines the absence of i) free electoral competition for political leadership with ii) the absence of a liberal state able to uphold the rule of law.

Within the chosen post-Soviet setting we should expect to identify states belonging to at least type 1, type 2, and type 4, respectively. Type 3, while being theoretically meaningful and with empirical examples in the past, is not to be expected in the world of today (see Diamond, 1999).

Indicators

After much travail, we have now descended to the denotative level, to the operational side of the conceptual coin, that is. As indicated by the term, Adcock & Collier (2001) advocate that we turn the attention to the actual indicators meant to capture the chosen concept empirically. Some caution may be in order, however. This paper aims only to deal with conceptual matters, not empirical measurement. Also, operational definitions – i.e. definitions that in themselves incorporate the identification of the empirical references

– are extremely complicated matters, not least within the study of regime change.

I follow Sartori (1984: 34) in arguing that the social scientist is faced with three, separate operational problems.

1) The border problem (to be settled by denotative definitions)

2) The membership problem (to be settled by précising definitions)

3) The measurability problem (to be settled by operational definitions)

In this paper, it is only the first of these three problems that will be treated. I will seek to settle the denotative side of the coin for each of the four types identified at the level of the systematised concept and I will do this by employing an elaborated version of Dahl's criteria for polyarchy. Luckily, it is only necessary to expand the scheme with one category, namely the rule of law. Instead of seeking to reinvent the wheel, I will use Diamond's (1999: 11) formulation as criteria, i.e. whether "...legal rules are applied fairly, consistently, and predictably across equivalent cases, irrespective of the class, status or power of those subject to the rules".

Figure 5: The elaborated version of Dahl's criteria for polyarchy

1. Elected officials.	Control over government decisions about policy is constitutionally vested in elected officials.
2. Free and fair elections.	Elected officials are chosen in the frequent and fairly conducted elections in which coercion is comparatively uncommon.
3. Inclusive suffrage.	Practically all adults have the right to vote in the election of officials.
4. Right to run for office.	Practically all adults have the right to run for elective offices in the government, though age limits may be higher for holding office than for the suffrage.
5. Freedom of expression.	Citizens have a right to express themselves without the danger of severe punishment on political matters broadly defined, including criticism of officials, the government, the regime, the socio-economic order, and the prevailing ideology.
6. Alternative information.	Citizens have a right to seek out alternative sources of information. Moreover, alternative sources of information exist and are protected by laws.
7. Associational	To achieve their various rights, including those listed above,

autonomy.	citizens also have a right to form relatively independent associations or organizations, including independent political parties and interest groups.
8. The rule of law	Legal rules are applied fairly, consistently, and predictably across equivalent cases, irrespective of the class, status or power of those subject to the rules.

This brings us to the following denotative definitions with respect to the four types:

1) Liberal democracy is a *political regime form where all 8 criteria are fulfilled*.

2) Illiberal democracy is a *political regime form where all the former 4 criteria are fulfilled, whereas the latter 4 criteria are more violated than fulfilled*.

3) Liberal autocracy is a *political regime form where the latter 4 criteria are fulfilled, whereas the former 4 criteria are more violated than fulfilled*.

4) Illiberal autocracy is a *political regime form where both the former 4 and the latter 4 criteria are more violated than fulfilled*

Conclusions

To conceptualise democracy is not an easy task. It is one of those riddles that does not have one right solution. Instead, the chosen definition must reflect the research question posed – and the empirical reality placed under scrutiny. To paraphrase, the validity of the definition is ultimately a function of the conceptual considerations themselves. The researcher must play with upon cards, make his in-

terim considerations explicit and make his definitions logically coherent.

In the present paper, I have attempted to develop a conceptualisation of democracy capable of capturing the reality of post-Soviet transition processes. To do so, I have departed from Schumpeter's classic electoral definition, yet, have maintained his emphasis on democracy as a method. Assisted by Dahl's notion of polyarchy and O'Donnell's focus on a liberal state capable of upholding the rule of law, I have arrived at a typology of political regime forms. It divides the theoretical property space into the four types of liberal democracy, illiberal democracy, liberal autocracy and illiberal autocracy, respectively. In emphasising both the electoral and the liberal element of democracy, the typology exhausts the dependent variable of the political regime form. Also, it is able of setting dissimilar countries apart, depending on their ability to pass the electoral and the liberal threshold, respectively. This typology presents a fruitful point of departure for empirical research on post-Soviet transitions.

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The state of democracy in advanced industrialised societies – a sociological approach

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ABSTRACT: Throughout the last two centuries and especially since the Second World War, no theme has more preoccupied the fields of political science and political sociology than nature, conditions and possibilities of democracy. Since the onset of the third wave of global democratic expansion (Huntington, 1991), considerably more countries have democratic forms of governance than ever before – 89 in 2003 by the count of Freedom House. On the other hand, the performance of many long standing democracies, such as the United States, is proving less than satisfactory to their publics, resulting in a demand of reform and declining vote turnout.

Does democracy work? Commonly it is assumed that democracy in advanced societies is working well. This article will dispute this argument and discuss the state of democracy in advanced industrialised societies. Democracy will not be assumed as a static concept, but as continuously shaped in the interaction between the state, market and civil society. This is especially the case in advanced industrialised countries, on which this article will focus.

The aim of this article is to discuss the state of democracy in advanced industrialised countries. The positive effect of economic growth on the level of democracy was already noted in 1959 by Lipset. Much research within the modernization school has been focusing on the determinants of democracy from the viewpoint of less democratic countries to achieve higher levels of democracy.

Now what this line of research has lacked to address is how the high level of economic development in advanced and democratic countries such as the USA, UK affects society in general and thereby the characteristics of democracy. Firstly, the article will outline and consider the social requisites of democracy noted by S. Martin. Lipset. Secondly the article will take a sociological approach to investigate the impact of economic development on the character of democracy in advanced industrialised societies. Inspired by Jürgen Habermas' system life-world approach and the concept of discourse ethics it will be argued that high levels of economic development possibly have some negative side effects on the characteristics and substance of democracy in advanced industrialised countries. Thirdly, the article will draw on empirical data for a range of OECD countries to show a significant decline in voter turnout in the period 1945-2003.

Introduction: Democracy - rule by the people

Democracy as a political form of governance means rule by the people. The two parts of the definition "people" and "rule" has historically been interpreted differently. From ancient Greece and to present times some parts of the population have been excluded from voting. First in the 20. century the people has been conceived

as all (broadly speaking) adult citizens. The concept of rule has also been contested through history. Until the end of the 18. century democracy was associated with direct participation of the people. However, with the development of the modern nation state this form of direct participation was seen as unsustainable. The democratisation of the large nation states took place through the development

of representative liberal democracy, in which the people votes to elect members of a representation organ to represent them and their respective points of view (Svensson, 1997). On this basis the article will assume that voter turnout can be seen as the link between civil society and the citizens on the one hand and the state on the other hand. Thus, voter turnout is seen as a proxy for the participation, commitment and involvement of the individual citizen in the democratic process.

The relationship between citizen and state has been one of the main issues in the social sciences since the origin of the nation state. In the 18. Century Rousseau spoke of the sovereignty of the people, in which the people are to govern themselves through the political system (Rousseau, 1987; 106-107). Turning to the classics, Max Weber had doubt about the durability of this sovereignty, as he instead stressed the possibility of a dominating bureaucracy (Weber, 2002:145). Furthermore, Weber stressed that as capitalism develops it turns into an immense economic system, which controls the way of life of the individual whether it is wanted or not. Thereby capitalism transforms into the famous notion of an irrational "iron cage" (Weber, 1989: 181). Thus, Weber implies some of the possible negative side effects of economic development on society, which is to be explored in more detail by a Habermasian approach.

Economic development and democracy - The Lipset hypothesis:

The social requisites of democracy has been analysed by Lipset over a period of more than two decades (see Lipset, 1959, 1994). Lipset's general argument is simply that democracy is related to the state of economic development. The more well to do a nation is, the greater the chances that it will sustain democracy. The idea of prosperity's positive effect on democracy Lipset, however, traced back to Aristotle: "From Aristotle down to the present, men have argued that only in a wealthy

society in which relatively few citizens lived in real poverty could a situation exist in which the mass of the population could intelligently participate in politics and could develop the self-restraint necessary to avoid succumbing to the appeals of irresponsible demagogues" (Lipset, 1959:75).

The explanation for the positive effect of economic development on the likelihood of a country establishing and maintaining democracy emphasises political culture and social structure. As to political culture, economic development is closely associated with increases in the general level of education, which promotes political attitudes conducive to democracy, such as tolerance of opposition and interpersonal trust. (Lipset, 1959:79,84). As to social structure, economic development alters the social stratification system from a pyramid shape to a diamond shape, in which the majority of the population is middle class and relatively well off and enjoys economic security instead of the majority being lower-class and poor. This transformation moderates the intensity of the class-struggle by reducing the proportion of the population that is susceptible to anti-democratic parties and ideologies and by increasing the proportion of the population that supports moderate pro-democratic parties (Lipset, 1959:83).

In addition to the positive effect of economic development affecting political culture and social structure Lipset stresses three spheres of society as social requisites of democracy; the state, the market, and civil society (Lipset, 1994:7-15).

The state - bureaucracy and judicial system:

Lipset stresses the development of an efficient and effective bureaucracy as a condition for a modern democratic state (Lipset, 1959:84). The stability of a democratic system is seen as being dependent on the effectiveness and the legitimacy of the political system. Effectiveness is the actual performance of a politi-

cal system, the extent to which it satisfies the basic functions of government as defined by the expectations of most members of a society. Legitimacy is the capacity of a political system to create and maintain the belief that existing political institutions are the most proper ones for the society. Both legitimacy and effectiveness is supported by an efficient bureaucracy and decision making system (Lipset, 1959: 86). An efficient bureaucracy furthermore stabilises and effectuates the diversion of public funds, welfare means, state employment and contracting. Finally, order and predictability are important for the economy, polity and society. If power is arbitrary, personal and unpredictable, the citizenry will not know how to behave, as it will fear that any given action could produce an unforeseen risk. Firstly, the rule of law means that people and institutions will be treated equally by the institutions administering the law (the courts, the police and the civil service). Secondly, that people and institutions can predict with reasonable certainty the consequences of their actions, at least as far as the state is concerned (Lipset, 1994: 15).

The market:

Lipset notes that a range of empirical studies have continued to find significant correlations between socio-economic variables such as GDP/GNI, educational attainments and level of health care and political outcomes such as free polities and human rights i.e. democracy (Lipset, 1994:16). This has led to the observation of the relationship between market economy and democracy. However, since it is possible for a country to exhibit market economy and an autocratic form of rule, it has been stressed that capitalism is a necessary, but not sufficient condition for democracy (Diamond, 1993; Waisman, 1992: 140-142).

Civil society:

Democracy requires a supportive culture, the acceptance by the citizenry and politi-

cal elite of principles underlying freedom of speech, media, assembly, religion, of the rights of opposition parties, of the rule of law, of human rights and the like (Lipset, 1994:3). Political stability in democratic systems cannot rely on force. In contrast to autocracies, democratic systems rely on and seek popular support and constantly compete for such backing. Democracy enables the citizenry to see the polity as including all societal elements, not only those being in power. In this way the electorate becomes part of the legitimating structure. Rather than the government, it is the people who holds the ultimate authority. This indicates that a robust and pluralistic civil society checks and balances the power of the state. A vital part in encouraging a stable democracy is a strong civil society, which can function as a political base and source of support for the political parties. Civil society can be defined as a myriad of mediating institutions including groups, media and networks that operate independently between individuals and the state (Lipset, 1994:12-15).

Summarizing Lipset's argument it is not economic development per se and certainly not economic growth that is the most important developmental factor in promoting democracy. Rather, it is the dense cluster of social changes and improvements, broadly distributed among the population, which can be summarized in the term socioeconomic development (Diamond, 1992:125-126).

A remark on the shape of the relationship between economic development and democracy:

Social scientists have been setting forward a number of theories on factors contributing to high levels of democracy. Factors such as economic development, religion, income inequality and colonial heritage have all been found as significant explanatory variables of the level democracy.

However, economic development is found to be the single most important explanatory variable of the level of democracy. A common view since Lipset in 1959 noted the positive correlation between indicators of economic development and high levels of democracy have been that prosperity stimulates democracy and that the Lipset-hypothesis is a strong empirical regularity (Barro, 1999; Diamond, 1992; Lipset, Seong and Torres 1993).

Lipset's notion of a direct relationship between economic development and democracy has been subjected to extensive empirical examination, both quantitative and qualitative. It appears that the relationship is not as linear as Lipset initially proposed. However, across a wide range of studies with great variety of samples, time periods and statistical methods the level of economic development continues to be the single most powerful predictor of democracy. Moreover, there is much historical evidence to support Lipset's hypothesis about the causal dynamics involved; that development promotes democracy by generating more democratic values and attitudes, a less polarized class structure, a larger middle class and a more vigorous and autonomous civil society (Diamond, 1992:6). It is worth stressing that Lipset's analysis as other theories in the "liberal" school assumes linearity, ignoring the possible negative impact on democracy that processes of changing from one developmental level to another might have. It establishes only a correlation and a causal trend, but not causality as such. Yet it does assume and infer that democracy is the consequence of the various developmental factors (Diamond, 1992:94).

For the purpose of this article it will be sufficient to assume that the form of the association between economic development and democracy is positively monotonic, but nonlinear. This indicates that as countries move beyond a certain level of economic development, their levels of

democracy would remain high and relatively stable (Muller, 1995:966). While accepting Lipset's general hypothesis, however, the argument of this article is that it would be erroneous to assume that once a certain high level of economic development and thereby a high level of democracy is reached, this will mean that the concept and characteristics of democracy stops evolving. Accepting the argument that the *level* of democracy in prosperous countries will remain high and relatively stable is, however, not the same as to question the characteristics of democratic society. Following Weber and Habermas the article will now discuss the continuing impact of economic development on society and democracy in long established democracies and industrialised societies.

Communication and democracy:

In order to rule the people must be able to communicate with each other, with the politicians representing them and with the bureaucracy serving them. This leads to the importance of the use of language in the democratic process and in society in general.

In order to discuss Lipset's social requisites, such as a market economy, an effective bureaucracy and judicial system and not least a vibrant civil society in established democracies the article will draw on the sociological approach set forward by Habermas. This approach is focusing more on the use of language than on actions or behaviour of the individual. This leads to the notion of the need to coordinate action socially by communication. Social action is perceived as either strategic or communicative (Habermas, 1984:285). For the purpose of this article it will suffice to ascribe two functions to the use of language; a regulative and an imperative function. In the regulative use of language participants raise normative validity claims and relate their utterance to something in a common social world in such a way that he or she intends to estab-

lish an interpersonal relationship recognised as legitimate. A validity claim may be criticised or defended argumentatively. The hearer, if not to switch over from communicative to strategic action, can oppose this claim to rightness only via criticism by offering reasons. To raise a validity claim is to assume the obligation of providing reasons for the claim. The communicatively acting speaker offers to redeem the validity claim if convincing reasons are put forward (Habermas, 1984: 302). This ensures that communicative action is co-ordinated by mutual acceptance or debate over acceptance. (Habermas, 1984: 303). In the imperative use of language participants relate utterances to the objective world, whereby the speaker raises a claim to power towards the addressee in order to get him to act in such a way as intended (Habermas, 1984:278). Communicative action differs from strategic action precisely in the condition of acceptability (Habermas, 1984: 297).

The system life-world approach:

From a habermasian point of view the advanced industrialised society is considered differentiated in two parts: the functionally organised system and the communicatively organised life-world. The system is divided into two subsystems, the economic system and the state (consisting of the administrative (bureaucracy) and political system. In advanced capitalist societies the capitalist economic system and the bureaucratic state are subsystems differentiated out from the components of the life world. (Habermas, 1989: 318). In the system actions are guided by strategic rationality implying that actions are taken from egoistic and goal rational considerations about which means best obtain a given goal using imperative speech acts (Andersen, 2000: 331-332). The life-world, as opposed to the system, is a sphere in which people are together and communicating linguistically without a given goal to be achieved. In the life-world actions are guided by a communi-

cative rationality, implying seeking consensus build on social norms and respect for the individual person by the use of regulative speech acts (Andersen, 2000: 332-333).

The state, the market and the judicial system:

The steering medium of the state (the political and administrative system) is power while the steering medium of the market is money. In interactions regulated by money actors are motivated by the satisfaction of needs or profitability not the recognition of criticisable claims to validity (Baxter, 1987:59). Both steering media is used to maintain the relationship and interactions between citizen and the state/market. Within the state actions are co-ordinated through the hierarchy of the bureaucracy in accordance with the purpose rational demand. Power as a medium is relatively independent of consensus and norms (Andersen, 2000: 331ff). Instead power as steering medium is characterised by effectiveness and efficiency of goal-attainment. The possessor of power can use sanctions to influence the other towards obedience. This implies that the handling of the citizen by the administration is taking place more commonly through forms, papers, considerations, reports etc. than through linguistic communication. When the state (the speaker) is holding power over the citizen (the hearer) – the latter is motivated to accept the speech act offer not by belief in the legitimacy or rightness of the speech act, but by the fear of punishment or the desire for rewards (Habermas, 1984: 301). Thereby the state mainly enforces its will by positive or negative sanctions and do not raise a claim to the normative rightness or underlying norms in the issuing of a command. The utterance does not depend on a normative background, stating under which conditions the act could be acceptable. (Habermas, 1984: 304). However, Habermas is aware that the state inevitably have to use power ”The social

state programmes demands a rather big amount of power to be elevated to law and to be financed by the state budget and implemented in the life-world of the citizens, who enjoys the benefits of these programmes (Habermas, 2001:201). From a habermasian standpoint power is not to be abolished, but instead power should merely build on dialogue within the limits of the law and not on control and sanctions.

The differentiation of the modern society is not primarily negative from a habermasian perspective. The dealignment of the system and the life-world is foremost considered a necessity to ensure that the two systems are able to operate with basis in their respective rationalities. Democracy cannot control the society as a whole because the modern society is too complex. Therefore it is not beneficial by any means to abolish the market or the administrative system. This is due to the capability of the administrative system to ensure a certain degree of social justice and fair distribution of income and individual freedom, while the market is characterised by large efficiency gains compared to other organisational forms of the economy, as it is able to maximise the aggregate wealth of society (Eriksen, 2003:271-272). In addition, basic macro economic theory appreciates the fact that the market cannot function properly with out the state as market economies rely upon a sound and stable set of institutions involving property rights, commercial and contract laws, courts, police etc. without which few would be willing to save, invest and trade. Education, health service and infrastructure such as roads, ports, airports and public transport also contribute to economic development (Nellis & Parker, 2004:253).

Seen from the habermasian perspective the judicial system is to function as the medium for communicative power. In this way it will facilitate the transformation of the free communication in the public

sphere between citizens and the state into an administrative steering media in the shape of power, which the administration can use in its relations and interactions with the citizens. The judicial system is to intermediate between the factual and the valid. In order to operate functionally the judicial system has to appear as an objective reality, which functionally regulates the behaviour of society and at the same time exhibit intersubjectual legitimacy. In this way the citizen will perceive the law as meaningful and understandable and as having influence on the shape of the laws while at the same time being subdued to the law as its subject (Andersen, 2000:337-339).

Comparing Lipset's social requisites and Habermas' theory it becomes clear that both stress the importance of the same factors. Firstly, a well functioning market economy which generates sufficient national income. Secondly, an efficient bureaucracy to distribute this income and implement policy decisions. Thirdly, an effective judicial system as to secure a just treatment and a set of rules to regulate the market and society. Now, as opposed to Lipset it is clear that the theory of Habermas points in a more normative and procedural direction. The view of the judicial system not only as a regulator and safe guard, but in addition as a mediator between the citizen and the state is distinct in Habermas' theory. Furthermore Habermas' approach stresses that the state and thereby the administration uses and has to use power in its interaction with the citizen while the market uses money. However, it also points to the more negative and subtle side of the steering media of power and money

The life-world, the public sphere and civil society:

The life-world is composed of three components. Firstly culture, which is the cultural tradition shaping actors interpretative schemes and value standards. Secondly society, understood as the institu-

tional order of society and thirdly personality, which are the competences that make an individual capable of communicating and put him in a position to take part in the processes of reaching understanding and thereby to assert his identity (Habermas, 1989:138). Communicative action takes place within the social context of the life-world, which constitutes taken-for-granted background assumptions and naively mastered capacities. The life-world becomes a horizon and background for social action. People pursue their individual goals under the condition that they can harmonize their plans of action on the basis of common situation definitions and institutional norms ensuring a stable form of life-world (Habermas, 1984: 286,336-337).

The interaction between citizen and state is taking place in the public sphere (Habermas, 1989: 319; Kaspersen, 2000: 329). The key point concerning the public sphere is that no specific form of power or control is installed. Instead there is a replacement of power and control with common sense. This implies that the connection between citizen and the state is taking place in a sphere being state free, secular and rational and thereby divided from both the state and the economic system. In this sphere the most rational argument will prevail (Haahr, 2000:4-5; Eriksen, 2003:264). However, it is not given that the interaction between state and citizen is taking place under these circumstances. From a habermasian point of view the citizen is seen as part of the life-world and the state as part of the system. The interaction between the two is ideally constituted via dialogue in the public sphere, but as often via power, which is the steering media of the state.

The purpose of the interaction between the state and citizen is in the ideal situation to create consensus and mutual understanding. In order to initiate this ideal relation Habermas advances a discourse ethic as basis for a social order in which

institutions and norms build on communicative rationality, even though citizens and the state initially are bound by opposite rationality (Andersen, 2000:334-336). Habermas' discourse ethic is formulated as "a norm can only be legitimate if it finds consent and support by all involved and affected participants in a discourse" (Habermas, 1983:75). It must be assured that all affected parts have access to take part in the discussion and thereby put forward their arguments in a discussion characterised by dialogue and not by force, power or control. If this procedure is to be followed the relationship between citizen and state is consistent with the domination-free dialogue (Andersen, 2000:330). And it is ensured that democratic political institutions and thereby policy emerges more from debate than from fiat (Baxter, 1987:51).

Citizens exchange taxes (money) for organisational performances and mass loyalty for political decisions. All these relations are regulated by the medium of money or power (Habermas, 1989: 320). Value commitments cannot be transferred to the political/administrative system via the medium of power, if the relation between citizens and the state is not taking place within the public sphere under the ideal conditions. The judicial system only in the ideal situation of the domination-free dialogue secures that steering media of power and money are anchored in the life world, in reality this is not always the case.

Both Habermas and Lipset point to the centrality of a civil society and its function as an intermediating layer between state and the people. Lipset assigns high importance to the political parties and other organisations of civil society and their vital role as independent mediators. Habermas' approach stressing the normative and procedural functions of the public sphere shows how the interaction between the state and people might be obtained under ideal conditions. However, it also

indicates that this ideal situation is not always a fact in reality primarily due to the fact that the state and citizens operate under different rationality.

The risk of colonisation of the life-world and its consequences:

The colonisation of the communicatively structured life-world by the economic and administrative system is conceived as progressive monetarisation and bureaucratisation of a society's communicative infrastructure. The steering media of money and power is replacing ordinary language in its function of co-ordinating social action. This represents an uncoupling of interaction from life-world contexts in general diminishing the mechanism of linguistic understanding and consensus (Habermas, 1989: 281). The discourse ethic, which can lead to the domination-free dialogue, is only to be appreciated as an ideal for the relationship and interaction between state and citizen. Though the possibility for consensus and understanding is present it is far from sure that it will be obtained in reality. From the habermasian perspective it is stressed that modern society has a build in risk which is especially the case of the economic system which is characterised by a number of defaults. This leads the administrative system to compensate for market failures, such as monopolies, negative externalities (ex. pollution), unemployment and inflation.

Due to market failure symptoms as unemployment, psychological illnesses as stress, depression etc. the state is forced to increase its goal rational management capacity at the expense of the communicative rationality of the life-world. Increasing use of social benefits and other welfare programmes in turn diminish the quality of the life of the citizens via decreasing self-esteem, dignity and there by causing personal crisis and weakening belief in political institutions. Thereby the life-world of the citizen is colonised by the system (Habermas, 1989: 318ff; An-

dersen, 2000:337). In addition the pressure of the market economy on profits, increasing work load etc. means a further increase in the monetarisation of the work place relationship between employees and the relations between firms on the expense of a social and communicative relationship.

The state seeks to reach the life-world of the citizen and to uplift market failure problems, but by a medium opposed to the rationality of the citizen. The result is a false domination-free dialogue, in which the state via power and money as steering media tries to reach the life-world of the citizen, which to succeed will demand the use of consensus orientated communication. Thereby a conflict emerges between the two opposite forms of rationality. According to Habermas: "Power as a medium is not capable of producing life forms" (Habermas, 2001:202).

The purpose of the life-world is to secure social integration, which main function is the co-ordination of action through legitimately recognised interpersonal relations and the securing of the identity of groups to a degree sufficient for everyday life. The fulfilment of this function is evaluated according to the solidarity among members of a society. The failure of social integration due to the colonisation of the life-world by the system leads, within culture to a threat of identity, within society to anomie and within personality to alienation. In such crisis social solidarity becomes scarce. Failure of cultural reproduction is manifested in loss of meaning, leading to a legitimation crisis in society and an orientation crisis in personality (Habermas, 1989: 140-141). Legitimation crisis in society will diminish the legitimacy of the political/administrative system and ultimately endanger the political order (Baxter, 1987: 72).

Empirical findings:

From the discussion of the colonisation of the life-world by the system it is seen that

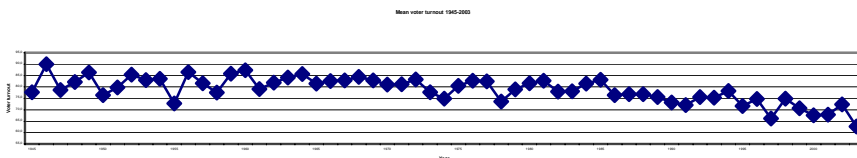
the possible consequences might be a decreasing solidarity, lack of identity and weakening belief in political institutions. Thus, from the theory of Habermas it could be expected that this would manifest in a decreasing voter turnout and party membership in highly democratised and industrialised countries. In order to test these propositions data on voter turnout for 17 OECD countries (those countries scoring highest on the Freedom House democracy index 2004) from the period 1945-2003 and party membership in the period 1980-2000 will be analysed. Looking at wealthy advanced and industrialized countries, such as the group of OECD countries you will find that they are characterized by the social requisites set forward by Lipset's analysis; Economic development, general distributed prosperity, high educational attainment, and thereby a democratic political culture and civil society. This is supported by data in table 1 showing that GNI per capita and net primary school enrolment rates for the considered OECD countries are well above the average of the world.

To discuss the state of democracy the article will draw on data on voter turnout and party membership for these 17 OECD countries, which at the same time achieve the highest democracy rating in the Freedom House survey of 2004 (see Annex

Tabel 1) The Freedom House rating of one indicates high levels of political rights and civil liberties. Under Freedom House's criteria of democracy elections are held freely, fairly and competitively and opposition parties and civil society play an important role in checks and balances (Feng, 2003: 44). However, to obtain a normal distribution in the data set and statistically test the trend in voter turnout in the period 1945-2003 OECD countries with some form of compulsory voting are excluded from the analysis (Australia, Belgium, Greece, Italy and Luxembourg) assuming that voter turnout in these countries does not show the real tendency because of the compulsory element.

Voter turnout data has been collected for every election (parliamentary and presidential) in each of the 17 countries in the period of 1945-2003. The data set is based on observation of voter turnout by the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (2004). The total number of observations in the data set is 319, which is the basis for the calculation of the mean voter turnout for the countries in general on a year by year basis. Voter turnout is measured as the number of votes divided by the number of names on the voters' register, expressed as a percentage..

Figure 1: Mean voter turnout for the period 1945-2003 in 17 OECD countries



Source IDEA

Looking initially at figure 1, it appears that there is a declining tendency of voter turnout out in the period 1945-2003 for the observed countries in general. From a maximum in 1946 of 90,0% to a minimum in 2003 of 62,7%.

In order to examine the significance of this trend more carefully the time span period of 1945-2003 is divided into three periods; 1945-64, 1965-84 and 1985-2003. To test if the difference and thereby the decline in mean voter turnout between

the periods is statistically significant there is used a T-test of the difference between the means. It is assumed that the data set exhibits a normal distribution and that the

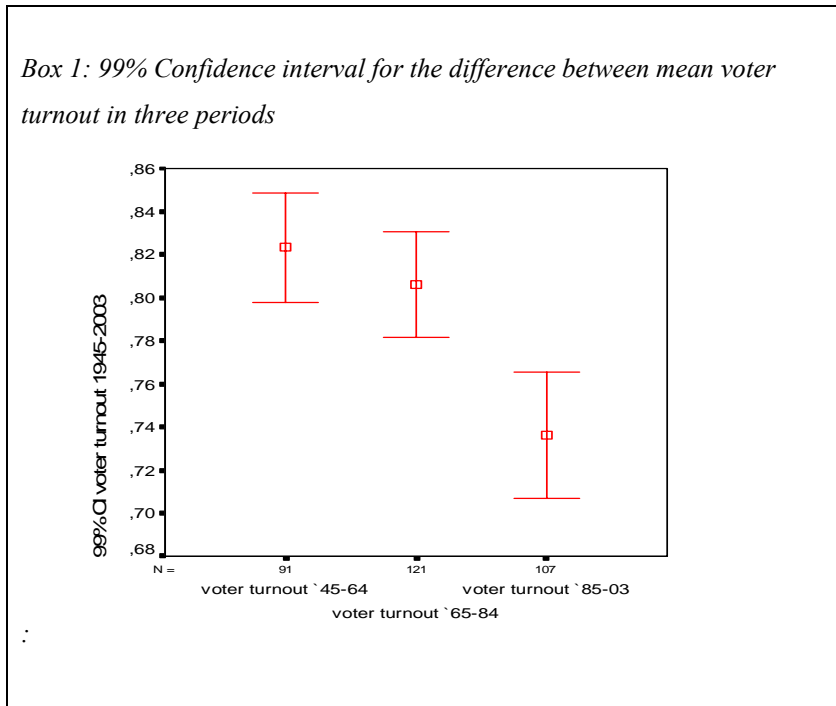
variance between the periods is equal. The result of the T-test is seen from table 1 and graphically from box 1:

Table 2: T-Test of the difference between mean voter turnout in the three periods:

Period:	Mean voter turnout	Std. error of mean	99% Confidence interval of the mean diff.	
1945-1964	82,3%	0,97%	79,8%	84,9%
1965-1984	80,6%	0,94%	78,2%	83,1%
1985-2003	73,6%	1,1%	70,7%	76,6%

From table 2 and box 1 it can be concluded that the difference in mean voter turnout is significant between the two periods, 1965-1984 and 1985-2003 on a 0,01 confidence level. However, it is not possible to claim a statistically significant difference in voter turnout between the

can also be expected to be associated with a decline in the party membership rates. If this is the case it will imply a threat to the position and functions of the political parties, which Lipset's asserts as the main intermediating organisation of civil society. However, the data on party member-



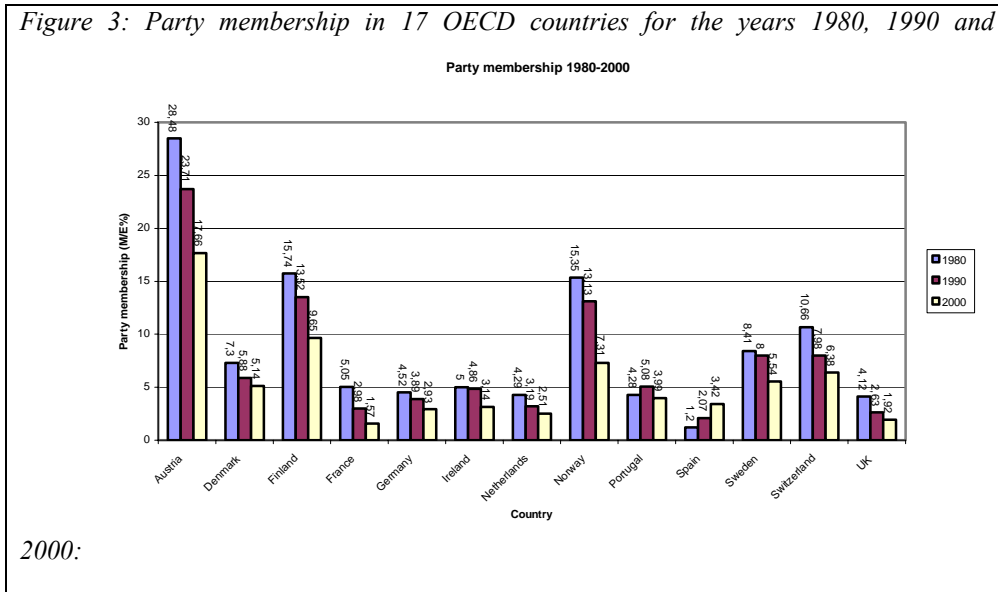
two first periods A weakening of the solidarity between citizens in society and a decline in the trust of political institutions

ship across countries is limited, and does not suffice to conduct a statistically significant

t test, due to lack of observations available. Party membership data for USA, Canada, New Zealand and Iceland is not available¹.

in 1980 between 28-15% declining to 17-7% in 2000. The remaining countries show party membership of 10-5% in 1980 declining to 5-2% in 2000. Now what is

Figure 3: Party membership in 17 OECD countries for the years 1980, 1990 and



2000:

However, data collected by Mair & van Biezen (2001) may cast a light on the tendencies of party membership in the considered OECD countries. These data are presented in figure 3.

Figure 3 shows the general party membership among citizens measured as membership as percentage of the electorate. Party membership among the considered countries varies with Austria, Finland and Norway exhibiting the highest party membership among the countries considered. Their level of party membership was

common for all the considered countries is a clear declining tendency in the percentage of the electorate, who is a member of a political party. However, in Spain there is observed an increase in membership throughout the period 1980-2000, though still at a very low level of membership rate.

Evaluating these empirical results against the expected proposition, of declining voter turnout and party membership due to lack of solidarity in society, a lack of identity and weakening belief in political institutions, it is in accordance with the theoretical expectations build on the Habermas approach, as it might be argued that the proposed negative sides of continuous market and state expansion have effect with a time lag of economic development and democratic experience. Thus the consequences are starting to appear in the period after 1985 although almost all of the considered countries have experienced economic development and stable democracy since 1945. The problem of

¹ Party membership is not a meaningful concept in the US. The closest approximation to party membership is partisan registration. Not all states have partisan registration, however, and many allow party registration on the day of election (Katz & Mayer, 1992: 888). In Iceland too party membership only implies party identification and not an organisational connection (Kristjansson, 2004: 165). Data for Canada and New Zealand is not available. However, Cross and Young (2004) find that few Canadians belong to political parties and those who do belong are not representative of voters generally.

declining voter turnout is that the government elected to rule is backed by a less and less part of the population as the voter turnout declines and thereby creates a reduction in the civil society base. Therefore it calls legitimacy into question and/or suggesting a lack of representation of certain groups in society (Patterson, 2002; Waatenberg 2002). Political parties appear to be suffering from the impact of the decreasing solidarity of society and the individualisation of social and political preferences, as well as from a more general unwillingness to rely on existing institutional structures to represent and articulate what appear to be increasingly particularised demands (Mair & van Biezen, 2001).

Conclusion and perspectives:

Lipset and Habermas' theories are compatible as to the importance of the social requisites of democracy; socioeconomic development, which in terms leads to higher educational levels, fosters democratic norms and trust, an efficient bureaucracy, market economy and judicial system. And not least an independent and vibrant civil society to intermediate between citizen and state. However, Habermas' theory goes a step further as to considering the possible effects of further market and state expansion on the characteristics of democracy in advanced industrialised societies. Certain social requisites exist which are conducive to the development and sustainability of the level of democracy. However these factors affect the characteristics and substance of democracy in other more subtle ways once democracy is stabilised implying that the concept of democracy does not simply stand still in the flux of societal forces.

The main finding of the article is that when democracy has been established and

stabilised on a high level, then further additional economic development implying further expansion of the market economy, the state and the judicial system will lead to an increased risk of system-colonisation of the life-world, which in turn seem to cause a decline in solidarity, identity and trust in political institutions manifested in declining voter turnout and party membership rates. The article finds a significantly declining long term trend for voter turnout in advanced industrialized societies.

Despite negative side effects such as declining voter turnout it is argued that the market economy and the modern bureaucracy have a range of positive social effects such as redistribution of income, welfare payments to those who are not capable or unfortunate and the provision of law and order to the benefit of citizens and the market economy. The critical approach of this article is not to be seen as a criticism of capitalism or the market. Both provide an indispensable basis for a prosperous and democratic society. What this article attempts, is to draw attention to the more subtle and negative consequences on civil society, which can be seen in countries commonly assumed to be well functioning democracies. It draws attention to the fact that democracy is not a static concept in terms of being unchanged in substance once it is stabilised on a high level as measured by the Freedom House survey. This implies that there possibly exists a measurement problem of the quality of democracy at high levels. The Freedom House scale does a fine job in measuring the quantity of democracy in the world, but it is not sufficient if the aim is to evaluate the substance of the established democratic societies.

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IDEA – International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance: www.idea.int

Unicef: www.unicef.org

World Bank: www.worldbank.org

ANNEX

Table 1: GNI per capita and primary school enrolment	
Country	
GNI per capita (US\$, 2003)	
Net primary school enrolment (%) (1996-2003)	
Freedom House rating (2004 survey)	
Austria	26.720
	91
	1
Canada	23.930
	100
	1
Denmark	33.750
	99
	1
Finland	27.020
	100
	1
France	24.770
	100
	1
Germany	25.250
	83
	1
Iceland	30.810
	100
	1
Ireland	26.960
	94
	1
Netherlands	26.310
	99
	1
New Zealand	15.870
	98
	1
Norway	43.350
	100
	1

Portugal	12.130
	100
	1
Spain	16.990
	100
	1
Sweden	28.840
	100
	1
Switzerland	39.880
	99
	1
UK	28.350
	100
	1
USA	37.610
	93
	1
World	5.500
	88
	-
Source: World Bank (World development indicators 2004), UNICEF and Freedom House	

Institutional trust in the context of post-communist democratic consolidation

Todor Arpad

Todor Arpad is currently an MA student at the National School of Political and Administrative Studies, Bucharest. A previous version of this material has been presented at the Euro Summer School Integrating Sociological Theory and Research in Europe (ISTARE).

ABSTRACT: Trust in institutions represents an indispensable ingredient for their legitimacy. The major post-communist social reshaping process is inextricably related with countries' institutional modernization capacity. Using data from Romania, Bulgaria, Serbia&Montenegro and Macedonia, this article approaches two different levels of this issue. The first relates to the societal and institutional legacies that influence the contemporary sources of institutional distrust. Informality, corruption and lack of efficiency not only that self-reinforce but they also create behavioral expectations from the mass-public. The second discussion approaches the individual level, studying the influence of social capital, different types of trust, personal experience and subjective well-being on individuals' predisposition to trust and act accordingly toward institutions. While experience and people's socio-economical situation has a minimal influence, subjective factors explain the bulk of variation.

Introduction

The post-communist Balkans countries have succeeded neither on the way of economical prosperity, nor on the way of acquiring and substantive democracy. Even if formal democratic regimes came into office, the process of democratic consolidation is still far from end. As in all post-communist countries, the past inheritances proved to be hardly to outclass. Lots of theoretical approaches have tried to explain why the vicious circles of under-development and poverty have perpetuated in the region. The only constant point of agreement is that all these countries experienced inefficient governments and generalized corruption at the level of all state agencies. Thus, political and administrative institutions still perform much below the optimum level. Almost all researchers in trust with the ex-communist space (Rose, Rose & Mishler, Pippidi-Mungiu, Ganev, Badescu, Inglehart) remarked the generalized lack of trust. With all these, informality works very well and is based on unwritten but deeply rooted rules. In the absence of the

societal mechanism that generates civic engagement and trust, rules of reciprocity remain the most important component of the social capital in the region. This approach studies the issue of institutional trust, focusing on several Balkans' countries. By comparing the structural determinants of institutional trust in five countries with relative similar histories, social, economical and cultural features, but with relatively different post-communist evolutions we try to reveal the possible influences of these latest evolutions. Following Mishler & Rose (1997; 2001) enquires we will test the implications of both institutional and socio-cultural theories on different types of institutional trust in the countries under discussion.

Historical heritage

¹ Romania is not geographically located in the Balkans. However, due to its history, except the Transylvania region, is culturally considered to be a part of Balkans. We use an opinion survey from the autumn of 2003, data collected in Romania, Bulgaria, Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro.

The Balkan region has always been a backward region compared to Western Europe. Until the second part of the 19th century, for Romania, and the beginning of the 20th for the rest of the countries in discussion, they had been dominated by the Ottoman Empire. While the societies remained predominantly Christian-Orthodox, the cultural features, inherited from the Byzantine Empire have been highly compatible with the Ottoman organizational culture. Compared to the Western Europe, the various aspects of modernization had usually been implemented with at least 50 years delay. Once the communist regimes came into power, following the ending of World War Two, the incipient modern inter-war social structures had been destroyed. Although the communist's intention was to impose a totally new social design, in most cases the new structure incorporated the pre-modern clan habits and connections. By destroying the Europeanized elite, the new class, whose members came predominantly from the inferior social layers, decisively perverted the communist ideal of a totally formalized society with complete control of the state. Thus, the cultural aspects proved to be more pervasive in the Balkans. Even if formal organized civil society existed, organizations like trade unions were in fact created by the state and used as means of control over the non politically regimented society. In these conditions informal networks gained control since they were "invisible" and connected to the political centers. Thus the Balkan region legacy has a very low stock of social capital based on civic engagement, but a high stock of informal networks. Rose (1998) argues the existence of many social networks in former socialist countries but of the "anti-modern" or "pre-modern" type. Thus, the development of informal elite networks led to institutional weakening and the creation of "negative social capital," which hindered economic development.

Ganev (2001) describes how these relatively closed social networks can be detrimental to institutional development in Eastern Europe. In his view the strategic interests and actions of such groups hinder successful implementation of institutional reforms with diminished state capacity and organizational coherence between administrative bodies, as a consequence.

Post communist evolutions

The post communist evolution has been massively influenced by the dramatic decrease of institutional capacity of the state. While the capacity and willingness of the state institutions to ensure an equal treatment for the citizens in front of the law decrease dramatically, a new type of economy developed. Based not on modern economical principles, but on the ability to use corruption in the relations with state institutions, the new economic framework did not create wealth but contributed to the redistribution of the national income. Delaying privatization enhanced only on short term social protection but offered time for the ex-nomenclature members of the secret services and communist managers to gain enough political, relational and economic power to control privatization. Perotti and Hellman (Blue Bird Report, 2003) propose an analytical framework based on a political economy model based on identification of types of social actors—losers, winners, and partial winners. Having different goals and different relative strength, the transition period's social actors interrelate in the social and political space and the results are shifting configurations that lead to varying attitudes toward reform policies. The present situation indicated that battle between the modernist and anti-modernist elites is still in the act. Taking into account the modernization goals, the policies aiming at increasing support for reform should focus on the long-term winners from reforms. In the same time, a strategy having

as goal a decreasing resistance to reform of the reform losers has to be taken into consideration (Blue Bird, 2003:24). Finalizing reform toward market economy and substantive democracy would affect one of the most powerful groups within these societies. Predatory elites can win only in the partial reforms situation, as “their predatory projects slash the effectiveness of social support programs (aiming at the losers of reforms) by channeling these programs’ resources away from the target groups” (Blue Bird 2003:27). By acquiring strong and influence position in the administrative and political system, they manage to obstruct the competitiveness and profitability of the agents acting on modern economy principles. Verdery (1998) demonstrates how local elites were able to maintain their power as leaders of collective farms and local councils since socialism. In the realm of economy, real competition is hindered, and private cvasi-monopolistic practices are maintained through the appeal to non-market means. Richard Rose’s approach on the post-communist world proposed a different facet of social capital networks, in view of the fact that they are used as survival tactics and in order to personalize relations with bureaucrats by using connections or bribery. According to Mishler& Rose (2001:31), “life in a Communist regime forced citizens to rely to an unusual extent on interpersonal relationships and connections to provide for their material and emotional needs and to protect themselves from an intrusive and repressive state.”

The present

Fifteen years after the collapse of communist regimes and ideology the countries from the Central and Eastern Europe succeed very differently on their historical recovering course on getting closer to the Occident. Besides the pressure, due to the economic and social transition, the inertia of the old institutions and culture did not allow a rapid acceleration toward a stable

and prosper democracy. The necessary social and economical reforms – needed to turn to a market economy – destabilized the existing social structure. An important part of the society got poor while only a thin layer managed to gain the benefices of the new economic freedom. As the break between the reform agenda and the short and mid-term expectations of citizens increased, the volatility of the social framework dramatically affected important parts of these societies. The UNDP Report (2003: 14) mentions three main factors that hinder democratization process, being major causes of instability: the widening gap between the public and the elite; the growing distrust in the reformist agenda; and the emergence of cynical and angry majorities. Due to this, “anticrime policies are a major component of building pro-reform constituencies”. (Blue Bird 2003:27). UNDP (2002: 17) consider that “epidemic party corruption has to do not so much with communist legacies, post-communist pathologies or the quality of the legal environment, but with the increase of the cost of politics.” The Balkan situation confirms Uslaner’s (2002b:22) finding that corruption should also lead to higher rates of business regulation; regulation can serve to restrict markets and extract extralegal payment from investors. In fact, even if regulation level is high, the level of real implementation is very low. Legal regulations are many times used as sources of discretionary power and justification for the official’s inefficiency. Even if the private sector varies between 40 and 70 percent, in all the countries in discussion a significant part of this sector is still state-dependent. This dependency manifests by two main means: many firm work almost exclusively with the state, thus parasite it, and many beneficiate by tax pay delaying. Due to the fact that none of the countries in discussion can be considered a winner of the democratization process, one major variable is absent. Having considerably

similar social features, the main differences in our sample reside in: years of democratization, degree of corruption and the absence or presence of ethnic war. Blue Bird (2003:30) proposes a classification of the Balkan states. The region is presented as a mixture of weak states, former failed states and present protectorates. Romania and Bulgaria are classified as countries approaching an advanced stage of democratization. Serbia and Montenegro are classified as countries starting the democratization process. Macedonia is classified as a country recovering from a severe political crisis (the breakdown of democratization). According to these dividing lines we identify two groups of states:

- Romania and Bulgaria: only medium corruption, comparative advanced democratization and democratically managing ethnic problems.
- Serbia, Montenegro and Macedonia: very high corruption, incipient democratization and recovering after post-violent ethnic conflicts.

Romania and Bulgaria are most advanced on the way of democratization and institutional modernization. Both of these states have managed to have a constant, even if sometimes slowed down, democratic evolutions, avoiding major political crisis. Romania's level of trust in democratic institutions decreased dramatically after the first years of transition. As a result of uncounted numbers of political-economical scandals, without any follows, almost 90 percent of the population believes that politicians and people with right connections are above the law. For example the fall of the FNI Investment Fund in 2000 created prejudices to more than 200.000 investors of about 1.5 billion dollars. Even if the guilty people were well known, no one has been put into jail after four years. At the level of NGO sector, even if more that twenty five thousand officially exist, Freedom House

(2002:316) argues that only 10 percent are really active. In terms of economic situation, the GDP per capita in Bulgaria is euro 2,290 for 2003 (6,900 euro at Purchasing Power Parity), and the average gross monthly wage is 145 euro. In 2002, about 38 percent of the total population was employed, of which 8% in industry (Ganev, Papazova & Rascho, 2004: 4). After the major economical crisis from 1996 to 1997 that led to a decrease of 16 percent in the GDP in two years, Bulgaria encountered a continuous economic growth and rating improvement. As in Romania, the really proportion of NGOs from the total number of formal registered is low, with a total number between 1000 and 2000 active NGOs. In Serbia & Montenegro, even if the first free election were in held in Yugoslavia in 1992, only in October 2000, after the overthrow of Slobodan Milosevic, the real process of democratization started up. Even if not fully democratized, the NGO sector has constantly developed in FRY after 1992. After 2001, an important amount of external funds led practically to an explosion of the sector. However we take into consideration the argument of Pickering (2002: 13) that the advocacy groups in Bosnia financed by US especially did not managed to build relationship that bridge ordinary people of different ethnicities, because they are not civic associations. Freedom House (2002:441) mentions that under the Milosevic regime, the FRY was generally considered one of the most corrupt states in the world. After half of century of communism and a decade of Milosevic regime, "legal and ethical standards and boundaries between public and private sector activity become blurred." (Freedom House 2002:441) Macedonia is among the ex-Yugoslavian states less affected by the decade of war. Between the 1991 secession and February 2001 the country has managed to obtain medium successes in the way to modernization.

Due to its ethnic structure², Macedonia has encountered a permanent internal and external pressure. Following the Kosovo conflict, the Albanian guerrillas (National Liberation Army) started a violent conflict in the northwest region. Due to Macedonia's government incapacity and to a convergence of political, economic, social and military circumstances in the region, primarily in Kosovo, the rebellion had a devastating effect on the country's economy. According to Freedom House report (2002:271) the short civil war brought "back the country's economic development by as much as 15 to 30 years". As in all countries from our regional survey, in Macedonia, despite the fact that the 123 municipalities (*opstini*) have elected mayors, their tax revenue from the total budget is limited, thus maintaining and increased centralization. Maintaining a high degree of budgetary centralization has a very deep effect on the local decentralized institution's capacity to adapt their activities according to the feedback received from the local communities.

Theoretical aspects

There are two main theoretical approaches to the sources of trustworthiness. According to Dasgupta (1998: 53), trustworthiness is "a person's overall disposition, his motivation, the extent to which he awards importance to his own honesty". While Dasgupta identifies the principal source in non-selfish motivations or internal values, Hardin (2002: 28) emphasizes the importance of procedural rationality, trustworthiness being defined as "the capacity to judge one's interest as depending on what one is trusted to do." Ahn (2002: 3) argues that "trustworthiness and trust are critical because structural and legal incentives alone are often not enough". Stolle (2000: 75) concludes:

² Macedonian (67 percent), Albanian (23percent), Turkish (4 percent), Roma (2 percent), Serb (2 percent), other (2 percent)

"the main division line in theories of trust is based on the distinction between approaches perceiving trust to be a context-dependent or even rationally informed decision and those considering it to be a rather stable personality trait or moral value." Gambeta (1988: 217) defines trust as "a particular level of the subjective probability with which an agent assesses that another agent or group of agents will perform a particular action." Hardin (1992) and Uslaner (2002) theorize strategic trust as one's predisposition to trust based on the knowledge about possible compartments. Badescu (1999: 102) proposes an enlargement of the strategic trust phenomena to all those types of trust that involve a rational calculus, even if the actors do not have all the necessary information, no matter if this is the result of personal experience or other person's experience. Rahn, Brehm & Carlson (1997) are assessing that a high level of citizens trust toward those in government is accompanied by a positive perception of the government efficacy – this perception leading to an increased degree of interpersonal trust. In opposition with generalized trust, Uslaner (1999) propose the concept of particularized trust understood as "placing faith only on your own kind". Pippidi-Mungiu (2004: 16), using the same database as the present paper, finds that individuals highly rating on particularistic trust „reside in the rural area and claim to have had negative direct encounters with people who abused their trust." Based on this, it is expected that particularistic trust to play an important negative effect on institutional trust.

Cultural theories are assuming that the sources of institutional appreciation are exogenous to the way institutions perform. Institutional theories by contrast, hypothesize that political trust is directly dependent on the institutional perceived compartment. The more they will act according to people's expectations, the more they will be trusted. Direct experience

with different institutions is considered by the micro-institutional approach to have a determinant role on someone's appreciation of an institution. Dasgupta (1988: 53) assesses, "trust is based on reputation and (...) reputation has ultimately to be acquired through behavior over time in well-understood circumstances". If, in the case of trust in individuals, the behavioral expectations are approximately definable, in the case of institutions the situation is different, since the circumstances and the norms to be respected do not have the same consistency. If we accept Hardin's (1999) hypothesis that the way we appreciate the capacity of government to solve problems depends on our expectations, then unconditional trust in institutions does not enhance democratization since it diminishes the citizens expectations. Institutional trust is an important ingredient in making them acting easily. However, this does not mean that institutions become more efficient as they are more trusted. In all democratizing countries the democratic legitimacy of the new system is strongly linked with the trustworthiness of the institutions. Besides the effects of corruption, public trust in institutions is determined by the way people believe specific institutions should act. Even this seems to be a truism, in fact what people believe institutions should do differs a lot along different individual characteristic and in different countries. Generally, there is no "Decalogue" for institutional behavior as it exists for the human one. In the same time we have to take into consideration the existence of three different ways through that people acquire in formations on public institutions. The first one is the direct contact, when people ex-

perience directly the institutional behavior. However, this type of contact is not the primordial source of information on institutions, since most of the people interact only with a few institutions, usually those that provide technical services. In the same time, the interpretation of people's direct contact largely depend on their own expectations. The most common example relates to the use of bribe. While for someone offering a bribe for obtaining a service may be a normal aspect, the necessity to pay this extra tax it can be interpreted as an abuse. The second one is the information acquired from relatives and acquaintances, generally through other people's experience. The third type represents the information obtained through the mass-media channels. Mishler & Rose test the implication of the cultural vs. institutional theories across 10 post-Communist countries concerning political trust. According to them (2001: 50) popular trust in political institutions is vital to democracy, but in the post-Communist countries skepticism and distrust in institutions are pervasive. They assume that in the conditions of a corrupt and inefficient state with a collectivist political culture, people tend to reinforce the lack of trust and cooperation by preferring to use informal way to get things done. Our survey confirms their finding that trust in political and civil institutions is generalized across institutions. However, the correlation between trust in political institutions and trust in the institutions that provide services is only .609, (Table2) showing that an important part of the variation is determined by other factors.

Table 2
Pearson Correlations

		FS Trust in political institutions	FS Trust in service provider institutions	ser-FS Civic engagement	Moralistic trust
FS Trust in political institutions	Pearson Correlation			-.022	.144**
	Sig. (2-tailed)			0.99	.000
	N	5743		5592	5592
FS Trust in service provider institutions	Pearson Correlation	.609**		.048*	.134**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.002	.000
	N	4222	4315	4228	4236
FS Trust in law institutions	Pearson Correlation	.734**	.737**	.018	.157**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	0.225	.000
	N	4782	4248	4637	4790

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Factor scores. Country samples weighted

One of the most common experiences for the people of the ex-communist space, and especially in the Balkans and ex-Soviet countries, is that law is not the same for everyone. If it's true that all around the world powerfully and reach people are advantaged in these issue, at least informally by having access to very good lawyers, in the Balkans this became a rule in the last years. The "amoral familism" phenomenon documented by Edward Banfield (1958), in Southern Italy, became a natural shelter in the way of a more and more insecure world. In the moment when modern formal institution fail to work as in modern societies and when the official incomes of most of the population are not enough to secure minimal living standards, the links based on family and kinship are enhanced to the maximum. In the first years of transition, the ideological heat was high, with intense levels of political confrontation, thus corruption was not a perceived as a major issue. Once the market economy vision gain an important ascendant on the

statist-centralised organization, corruption came in the front-page of social attention. From the top of politics to the last civil servant, corruption and apparent lack of interest for the general interest is pervasive. The "business politicians" (Della Porta, 2000), acting as power brokers are the product of the new way of doing politics. By using their power to influence the legislative and regulative framework, combined with their informal immunity to the rule of law, they have managed to gain enormous fortunes. The Romanian experience showed that at the micro-level the local predatory elites can use their network social capital in order to become power and resources brokers. Named by della Porta (2000:227) "*bad*" *social capital*, these informal networks have penetrated the societal decisional organisms, directly influencing phenomena like the spread of corruption, or institutional inefficiency and resource allocation. From the micro level to the macro situations, informality with decisional factors becomes an important factor for success in what-

ever enterprise. A research on the Romanian elite informal networks¹ found that the elite informal networks are used as channels of communication. Most commonly these networks are used as means of finding out how to avoid the law and about resource allocation opportunities. Giving an answer to the dilemmas of how to enhance positive cooperation with institutions relates to the consequences of individuals' social capital network. Does the conjuncture or the personal characteristics determine people's use of negative social capital? Della Porta (1999: 216) rejects the functionalist thesis that corruption has a positive effect by "oiling" bureaucratic and political mechanism, assessing that political corruption destroys trust in institutions since it seriously affects the efficiency of public administration. In fact, in many post-communist countries the levels of political corruption have varied in accordance with the officials' capacity of being corrupted. When privatization accelerated the levels of political corruption increased too.

Social capital and trust, as defined by Putnam (1993), is based a lot on the premise that defectors can be excluded or sanctioned. On the other hand, in the case of a rapidly changing social structure – changes accompanied by a restructuring of the social values – social capital networks become weaker. Since social networks are rapidly changing, exclusion does not work as in stable societies, since it is not a very powerful incentive. In the same time, besides explanations related to the lack of trust, civil networking is hindered by the high societal stress (Pippidi-Mungiu 2004:12), produced to the massive social reshaping and general poverty. In the condition of a low degree of trust reciprocity gets a prominent role in the

¹ Project "Corruption, Conditionality, Corruption and informal institutions". The author has been personally involved in this project that consisted in 90 elite interviews.

life of the community. In explaining the important role played by informality we employ Hooghe's (2000: 2) argumentations that trust is eroding when its main sources – familiarity, predictability, resemblance between actors and closure networks – are eroding. Following Hooghe's argument (2002) that reciprocity is a weaker, procedural norm than the substantive norm of trust, we assess that it functions better because it minimizes risk, since it is individually dependent. If we take into consideration the normative aspects, then "cooperation with institutions" becomes a very tricky concept. In fact, people usually cooperate with people, and enhancing cooperation with people working in different state institutions means enhancing informal contacts. Even if informality does not lead automatically to corruption, if the conjectural factors enhance corruption, then, these informal relations will be used in this direction. In the moment when many businesses are dependent on the state agents in order to maintain on the market, corruption develops naturally. If "ambient corruption" (Freedom House 2002: 281) is so pervasive in all countries being synonymous with normality, then citizens meet corruption in every social action, both in private and public life. According to della Porta (2000), corruption creates strong norms of reciprocity between the public official and the corruptor, thus leading to a high degree of conformity to the norm of corruption. In this way corruption is not any more an action that is initiated by one side, but a custom acknowledge by both sides. Based on this argument we reject Uslaner's (2002b) argument that trust and corruption rest upon fundamentally different views of human nature, since corruption is usually impossible in the absence of trust. On the other hand we agree with Uslaner's (2002b: 34) argument that at a societal level the most pervasive feature of corruption is that it is a transfer of resources from the mass public to the elite

and generally from the poor to the rich. According to Uslaner (2002b: 36) the effect of corruption on trust is higher than the converse situation. Corrupt leaders breed distrust throughout society. As society become less corrupt, they do not become more trusting. Yet, as countries become more trusting, they become less corrupt.

Data interpretation

Following the division proposed by Mungiu-Pippidi (2002) we divided the institutions in three categories: political institutions², service providers' institutions³ and law institutions⁴. In order to obtain an aggregate image of people's trust and to avoid different biases, we have first aggregated the trust in these institutions in three factor scores, subsequently using them as dependent variables in the OLS regressions.

Uslaner (2002) assesses that the political trust is in fact a form of strategic trust toward those that govern. This type of trust has to be accompanied by a positive perception on the efficiency of the governing acts. The OLS Regression model for trust in political institutions shows a rather heterogeneous profile for the countries in discussion. The only common predictor is the perception on the honesty of central government, a variable that measures to a high degree the same conceptual field.

According to Mishler & Rose (2001: 50) the effects of the socialization variables on political trust are weak. Our findings contradict partially their findings trust in people having a medium impact on all forms of political trust. The explanatory model for trust in political institutions is the only one where the proposed classification in two groups (see page 39) of countries seems to be viable. While moralistic trust is not important at the country

level, particularistic trust combined with agreement that social organization is unfair, are playing an important negative effect on political trust in Macedonia and Serbia & Montenegro. The fact that both Macedonia and Serbia & Montenegro experienced recently major political destabilization that politically polarized these societies, explain why this cultural factors play such an important role. Romania is the only country where the interaction with institutions and the use of bribe are negatively correlated with trust in political institutions. Since the level of corruption is equal with Bulgaria but lower than in Macedonia and Serbia & Montenegro, this may indicate that citizens identify their source of problems in the central political system, and not at the local level. According to Rose-Ackerman (2001: 566) "generally lower levels of trust and higher levels of perceived corruption" are associated at the national aggregate level. Our data argument that, in the case of undeveloped countries, this relationship is valid at the individual level too, but is strongly mediated by the lack of subjective and objective personal development and social frustration. While in Romania, the importance of the ideological aspects become less important, in the other countries the ideological stakes are still high. The fact that in both countries the political forces at power are oriented toward a peacefully approach on the ethnic problems may determine why particularistic trust is so important.

Due to the societal design, in the ex-communist space, the wealthier you are, the higher the chances are to interact with formal institutions. The more you interact with these institutions, the better you know how the system really works. Our data confirm Sandu's (2003: 107) finding that in Eastern Europe the most important dimension of using relational capital seems to be health related problems. Around 60 percent of the people that interact with institutions are satisfied or

² Parliament, Government, President.

³ Local government, Post-office, Telephone state company, Health system, Schools, Tax office.

⁴ Courts, Prosecutor, Police.

very satisfied with the service they receive. However, the conversion of these results into higher institutional trust is not direct. The correlations between a given satisfaction with the service received in dealing with the respective institutions and the general evaluation of the same institutions is lower than expected, ranging from 0.31 for the local government to 0.22 for the tax office. Moreover, this variable is negatively correlated with trust in political institutions at the aggregate level. Excepting Serbia & Montenegro, the most corrupt state from this group, in all other countries those that interact with institution have a significantly higher degree of trust in service provider institutions. These is not so much an argument that these institutions are not so badly working as the majority beliefs, but that there is a significant difference between the information obtained through mass-media channel and the directly perceived reality. The other two major determinants of trust are the perception on the honesty of government's improvement and subjective well-being, both of these variables measuring a highly subjective projection. Bulgaria is the most interesting case, while subjective well-being is absent as a predictor for trust in service-provider institutions, the projection of government evolution being the highest predictor (.507***) from all twelve OLS Regression. The situation from Bulgaria can be interpreted in the sense that the population manifests the lowest degree of evaluation based on values.

Rothstein (2001: 21) finds in the Swedish case a strong correlation between trust in the legal system and faith in people. On these findings, he argues that if people appreciate the judicial and the police to be fair they will be more trusting. Our data neither confirm this finding nor reject it. At an aggregate level, moralistic trust is significant in all three models, but at country level is significant only in a few cases. The fact that moralistic and particu-

laristic trust has an opposite influence in all three models confirms Uslaner's (2002) conclusion that the moral and particularized trust have polar characteristics that come from the way they are defined. While moralistic trust is determined by the way others are represented, particularized trust is based on the belief that there are essential differences between those that belong to one's group and other people.

Our findings confirm those of Pippidi-Mungiu (2002:96) that socialization has a moderate role as an enhancer of trust, but this is not mediated by civic participation. Even if we accept North's (1998: 494) assertion that "historical experience makes clear that efficient institutions are the exception", trust is highly influenced by what people believe to be efficient. The variables that measure quality interaction with institutions (use of bribe, abuse by public institutions) have a general low impact. The most important effect is determined by the intensity of interactions with institutions. The only country where the use of bribe has a negative effect on institutional trust is Romania. This may be interpreted in the sense that Romania is the only country where the societal learning process got to the point where corruption becomes an intolerable phenomenon. The fact that this predictor is significant in the case of all the three factor scores brings another argument in this direction. According to Rothstein (2002b: 16) "Government institutions generate social trust only if citizens consider the political institutions to be trustworthy." The main argument is that institutions of law and order have the task to detect and punish defectors. If these institutions work effectively, then people will believe that they are safer, since a harm that may be produced to them might be repaired by these institutions. Our findings do not bring clear arguments in sustaining the institutional or cultural approach. However it seems that,

as country becomes more democratic, a process of societal learning takes place. As countries become more democratic, people's demands from institutions increase. In the same time, the fact that voluntary associations do not stand for the role of enhancing trust⁵ but they seem to create a bridge between citizens and service provider institution.

Mishler & Rose (2001) find evidence to strongly support the superiority of institutional explanations of trust, especially micro-level explanations, while providing little support for either micro-cultural or macro-cultural explanations. The reason that our data do not confirm their findings is that, in their approach, trust in all institutions has been used in a single factor score. In the moment we propose different models for each type of trust, we discover that significant factors are only partially common. One of the most astonishing findings is that encountering abuse by public administration is not a significant factor in none of the models. Most probably people expect to receive low quality services and if they do, it seem normal. This shows that they do not make a direct correlation between the general activity of institutions and their direct experience. In the same time, the more people interact with institutions, the more they are likely to trust service provider institutions and law institutions. This finding indicates that the services provided by public institutions are not of so low quality and that an important part of the perception on corruption is determined by the general image acquired from mass media and personal communication. As expected, particularistic trust is an important determinant of distrust in institutions of Serbia and Montenegro, countries ranking highest on corruption index.

⁵ In an OLS Regression with generalized trust as dependent variable, neither civic engagement nor trust in institutions is significant. The only significant predictors are: particularistic trust and abuse from people experience.

The most important predictors in all models for almost all countries are the subjective well-being and the perception on the honesty of government improvement. The fact that people have been abused by institutions or that they use bribery is much less important than believing that administration moves in the right direction. While personal development and personal income have only a regional significance, subjective well-being remains significant for all countries and all institutions. In the same time, it is very important to notice that the correlation between income and subjective well-being ranges from .248** in Romania to a maximum of .334** in Serbia & Montenegro. Working on data on Romania, Pippidi-Mungiu (2002: 84) found that people have a higher predisposition to trust people when they are better educated, meet a high subjective well-being and, very important, they live in developed regions. The model proposed in this paper confirms again these findings on Romania, but brings no evidence that this is true for the rest of the countries. Sandu (2003: 102) working on data from Romania, finds that richer from the poorer counties tend to have a higher relational capital. This conclusion is explainable through the fact that the less developed an area is the more necessary are informal relations in order to succeed.

Conclusions

Creating strong and democratic societies in the Balkans has proved to be an unsuccessful task until now. Even if things have changed, the rhythm has been very slowly, and at many points stagnation appeared in different areas. However, in the last years all the countries in discussion went on a general positive trend. Taking into account this positive trend and the fact that subjective well-being and the appreciation of central and local government's evolution are the most important predictors we asses that the most important source of institutional trust in the region can be located in those that perceive

themselves are the winner of transition. The difficulty of the transition process is increased by the fact that not only public policies to be implemented have to be changed, but also there is a need to change the people that implement these public policies. The experience showed that even the best laws can be fundamentally perverted when applied to the real system. The spirit and the word of a law are equally important. Institutional social capital is an important ingredient in the direction of Balkan societies' modernization. The fact that the local institutions are more trusted means that they are better adapted to the local public's need. We agree with Pippidi-Mungiu (2002: 95) that trust does not diffuse from political institutions to people. Instead, those institutions that provide services are perceived as partners. Satisfaction with the way public institutions work is associated with the ability of using these institutions, even through unconventional means. Although different cultural factors have an influence on institutional trust, the institutional explanation both micro and macro provide and coherent frame of interpretation. The higher importance of these factors in Romania and Bulgaria, countries that experienced a longer period of democratic consolidation, may be interpreted in the sense that the more the society's progress, the more institutions are judged on their behavior and not on the base of various cultural values.

We believe that, in the condition of a low developed society, the emergence of civic engagement is difficult if not impossible in the absence of a significant middle class. Decentralization can create more efficient local governments, but in the same time can lead to thrive of local predatory elites. The Romanian experience follows this pattern very closely. The most important step in decentralization occurred in 1998, when the local administration received an important supplementary power by receiving the right to di-

rectly collect taxes. While the most developed counties managed to take advantage of this change, by becoming more efficient, and, very important, creating an attractive environment for foreign and local investors, the poor counties did not. In many of the poor counties, the local predatory elite managed to obtain total control of the local resources. From the employment on the public institutions to auctions for public works, everything is controlled by a very well established network based on client services. Paradoxically, the predictability of state institutions in this context can be higher than in normal situations as the informal rules become deeply established and the outcome is easily obtained. Since actually the institutional capacity of the state to provide services is limited, while this capacity does not increase, one of the most pervasive reasons for corruption will not disappear. According to Joel Migdal, (1988) the state's strength is defined as the capability of governments to implement their policy visions, to penetrate society and to implement legal regulations. In this direction, state capture is defined as the situation when private interest groups "capture" portions of the public sector for their own purposes – and shape institutions, thwart public policies, etc. The Balkan states are characterized by a high degree of state capture. Changing this state of fact requires not only political will but civil society's influence too. One of the most important experiments concerning civil society's interaction with institution is Freedom of Information Law (*FOIA*) implemented in Bulgaria and Romania. Even it is not a perfect law, it allowed an increased control from the civil society, by forcing public institutions to become more transparent. Making public institutions work as in modern societies is a difficult and long-term process. Due to the peculiar context, people's willingness to approach institutions has a fundamental role. People have to begin thinking that

they have the right to receive a fair service from the state institutions. Even if trust in institutions is essential for the democratization process, it is efficient only if it is based on the trustworthiness of the

institutions. As long as institutions do not become more efficient and impersonal, trusting them would not enhance modernization.

	Romania			Bulgaria			Serbia & Montenegro			Macedonia		
	Political inst.	Service-provider	Law inst.	Political inst.	Service-provider	Law inst.	Political inst.	Service-provider	Law inst.	Political inst.	Service-provider	Law inst.
CON-STANT	**											**
Particularistic trust	0.012	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
		0.06	.082	0.08	.222	0.11	.214	0.08	0.11	.303	.305	.285
		1	**	**	**	5	***	4	***	***	***	**
Moralistic Trust	0.019	0.05	.068	.178	0.12	0.13	0.21	.285	.195	-	-	-
		3	*	*	5	7	9	***	*	0.00	0.11	0.01
										7	2	3
Unfair Society	.127**	0.02	-	0.01	0.10	0.00	-	-	-	-	-	-
	**	1	.135	3	6	7	.237	0.18	0.09	.257	0.19	.269
			****	4	8	7	**	1	9	*	6	*
Correct attitude is rewarded	0.054	0.03	.093	0.11	0.13	.168	0.18	-	-	-	-	-
		3	**	4	8	*	2	0.04	0.00	0.18	0.13	.294
								7	4	5	1	**
FS Social networking	-0.012	-	-	0.14	0.03	0.04	-	.216	0.04	0.10	.347	-
		0.04	0.01	4	7	9	0.06	**	8	6	***	0.05
		1	5				6					3
Someone abused his confidence	-	-	-	-	-	0.01	-	-	-	0.53	-	-
	.078**	.090	.085	0.14	0.07	6	0.16	0.12	0.17	-	.232	.221
		**	**	4	1	6	6	9	1	-	*	*
Anti-modern attitude toward administration ¹	-	-	.064	0.03	0.07	0.06	-	-	0.02	0.19	.302	0.23
	.113**	.065	*	5	1	1	0.00	0.00	9	3	**	2
	*	*					6	3				
FS Media consumption ²	0.001	-	0.02	0.06	-	.222	-	-	0.12	-	0.13	0.11
		0.04	7	3	0.13	**	.189	0.22	-	.204	4	6
		6		5	5		*	1	*	*		
Sum of interaction with institutions	.145**	.209	.141	-	.192	0.12	0.10	0.15	0.13	0.19	.322	.363
	**	****	****	0.01	**	7	6	1	3		**	**
				3								
Abused by public administration	-0.043	0.02	0.00	-	-	-	0.12	0.10	0.04	0.79	-	-
		2	6	0.09	0.00	0.00		5	8		0.01	0.11
				3	4	4					7	8
Use of Bribe ³	-	-	-	0.06	0.10	0.11	.225	-	0.16	-	0.01	0.04
	.138**	.087	.104		5	9	**	0.09		0.05	6	8
	**	**	***					4		4		
Has honesty of government improved?	.160**	.115	.112	.425	.507	.298	.380	.247	.205	.110	-	-
	**	***	***	****	****	***	****	**	*	*	0.06	0.00
											7	8
Subjective well-being Education	.129**	.131	.188	.299	0.09	.163	0.08	.322	.392	.394	.300	.118
	*	***	****	***	6	*	5	***	***	**	**	*
		9	4	8	2	**	0.17	8	7	0.12	0.16	5
	.077*	0.06	0.03	0.16	0.14	.242	-	0.19	0.05	-	-	0.08
										2	5	
Sex (1 male; 2 female)	0.064	-	-	0.10	0.09	.156	-	-	-	-	-	-
		0.02	0.02	6	2	*	0.03	0.07	0.07	.230	.202	0.14

¹ Question: There is nothing wrong in hiring one's own relatives over strangers when working in the public sector.

² TV, radio, newspapers

³ In relation with public administration

	4	6				9	9		*	*	8
Age	-0.02	-	.090	-	0.05	0.04	0.14	-	-	-	-
		0.03	**	0.08		4	8	0.18	0.04	0.11	0.02
		6		4				5	9	3	1
Income	-0.027	0.05	0.64	0.14	0.07	0.08	0.01	.232	0.11	-	-
		2		2		4	3	*	3	0.09	0.17
										1	4
Location	0.052	.103	0.25	-	0.13	0.15	0.05	-	0.09	-	-
		*		0.13	9	8	9	0.01	9	0.27	0.08
				6				8	9	3	.350
R square	0.167	0.12	0.16	0.28	0.32	0.25	0.49	0.47	0.34	0.43	0.43
		8		8	7	4	5	2	9	4	9
											3

In order to maintain comparability we present here the beta (standardized) OLS coefficients

*** Coefficient significant at the 0.001 level

** Coefficient significant at the 0.01 level

* Coefficient significant at the 0.05 level

Factor Score – Trust in Government, Parliament and President, KMO=0.839

Factor Score – Trust service provider institutions, KMO= .810.

Factor Score - Trust in Law Institutions (Court, Police, Prosecutor), KMO= .790

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Trust, Confidence and Social capital in the democratization process of Eastern Countries

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ABSTRACT: Current theories on the Eastern European Countries support the idea that the governments produce democracy (Choen, 1997, Levi, 1998, 1999; Offe, 1999, Rothstein, 2001). While some authors show a failure to find correlation between aggregate measures of social capital and democratization level (Dowley, Silver, 2001), others give evidence that distrust for politician or parties is a peculiarity of many eastern countries (Schmitter, 1994).

Using the European and World Values Studies (1995-1997) and considering six Eastern countries (Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Slovenia), we analyzed, with a model of structural equation, the impact of social trust, social capital, democracy support, and other socio-demographic variables on the level of democratization (Free House, 1997).

The results, on the aggregate level, show that:

- i) trust can produce democracy support (Inglehart, 1999) and democracy (Uslaner, 2002) but not the contrary as Levi and other scholars claim;
- ii) social capital, although registered at low levels, has an acceptable relationship both to democracy support and to democratic level;
- iii) the scarce democracy support (confidence in public institutions) has a negative impact on the democratic level.

The new democracy and democratization

Since the fall of the Berlin Wall, many non-democratic regimes have undergone a transition to democracy, that in the East Europe we can image as a “domino effect” or, talking about out the metaphor, “effect of diffusion” (Starr, 1991).

The nature of this process is surely ambivalent if we consider two aspects: on one hand, the political trust is determined by specific transitional processes and conditions in each particular country; on the other hand, taking into account the fast information exchange, we cannot ignore the influence of socio-political changes in Western countries on the Eastern states, defined as new democracies because they don't have democratic traditions.

In this sense, we need to include the possibility that certain disillusionment with representative democracy, which can be

seen in Western countries, may also create more scepticism and criticism in post-Communist countries with respect to democracy and its institutions.

The metaphor of the domino effect is well fitting if we think that from August to December 1989, six countries changed regime: the breakdown of non-democratic communist regimes, which started in Poland (August 1989) and continued in the other countries, has inspired many authors to invoke the “diffusion effect” in their research (Huntington, 1990; Lipset, 1994; Linz Stepan, 1996).

The literature on democratic transitions has focused on political processes and choice of actor to explain regime changes, thereby failing to investigate whether structural factors affect the recent rise of transitions to democracy (Rustow, 1970; O'Donnel, Schmitter, 1986; Di Palma, 1990; Przeworski, 1991; Mainwairing et

al. 1992). And it has synthesized the collapse of state socialism largely as a reaction to the interaction of two specific factors: economic decline and the international consequences of the Gorbachev reforms (Bunce, 1984).

Many studies of the new democracies that have emerged over the past two decades have emphasized the importance of a strong and active civil society to the consolidation of democracy. Especially with regard to the post-communist countries, scholars and democratic activists, alike, have lamented the absence or obliteration of traditions of independent civic engagement and a widespread tendency toward passive reliance on the state. In this sense, the advanced Western democracies, and above all the United States, have typically been taken as models to be emulated (Lundestad, 1998).

An explanation for the situation typical of the post-communist countries is offered from the *dictatorship theory of missing social capital*. In fact, many authors agree that dictatorships destroy social capital (Raiser, 1999; Paldam, Svendsen, 2000). The effects are considered to be even stronger when comparing a developed country to a transition country because in the developed country we see an interaction between different individuals from different groups. Looking at the history, we can say that many of these countries have had the possibility to establish a civic society for centuries, while the transition countries come from a completely different historical and institutional background.

In this study we focus attention on six Eastern countries surveyed in the World Values Study (1995-1997), specifically: Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Slovenia.

Using the cultural approach, we can move from the idea that confidence in institutions, which is an indirect indicator of democracy support, is important for democracy, and that democracy requires a

civic culture in which citizens manifest such basic values as trust. The assumption is that societies with low levels of trust are poorly suited to the establishment of democratic institutions (Putnam, 1993).

Many scholars have postulated that rising living standards and increasing levels of education facilitate democratization (Lipset, 1960; Lipset and Scheneider, 1983; Linz, 1988; Weatherford, 1989).

Yet, others assert that democratic traditions can be created in societies with a high degree of mutual trust and interest in politics (Almond and Verba, 1963; Easton, 1965, 1975; Wildavsky, 1987; Eckstein, 1988; Inglehart, 1990), where there is participation in voluntary organizations (Putnam, 1993).

This paper first verifies, empirically, whether the stock of social capital and confidence in institutions are different for each country. And then this is followed by a model of structural equation to understand how social capital, confidence in institutions, and some socio-demographic variables explain the democratic level of the countries (rating - democracy index classified by the Freedom House, 1997).

The principal results show that:

- trust, confuting the Levi idea, constructs democracy and not vice versa;
- social capital contributes both to the confidence in public institutions and to the democratization process, although the effect is weak;
- confidence in institutions has an inverse relationship with democratic level, evidencing the slowness with which the democratization process proceeds.

Social Capital and Democracy

One concept that has received much attention among social scientists is "social capital," particularly among students of countries undergoing democratization.

Social capital is a concept with high explicative power: a reliable and valid tool through which we can see and explain the

reality that envelops the people. Nevertheless, few scholars emphasise those aspects. Just as rare are empirical studies on this specific aspect, although social capital is seen as the cement of society, to paraphrase an interesting book by John Elster (1999).

Many kinds of social capital are currently recognized (Serageldin, 1996) and many definitions have been given.

On a macro level it is possible to divide the concept of social capital into two trends. The first one is based on a structural dimension. It refers to the fundamental elements of the network such as types of ties and connections and the social organization of the community (Bourdieu, 1983; Coleman, 1988; Fountain, 1998). The second one is based on a dimension in which social capital resides and includes the social norms, trust, shared understanding and those elements that hold people together (Jacobs, 1961; Putnam, 1993, 2000; Fukuyama, 1999; Cohen & Prusak, 2001).

Particularly interesting is the intersection of the theoretical positions by Putnam, who says social capital "refers to features of social organization such as trust, norms and networks, that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated action" (Putnam 1993:167).

The concept, as many authors claimed, is attractive theoretically, as it places so much emphasis on the activities of ordinary citizens, after a decade of bringing the state back into the centre of comparative political analysis.

Also Diamond (1997) has articulated in several writings that social capital is best developed in the organisations of civil society that are largely non-political and certainly non-partisan. In other words, voluntary organizations, especially multiple and cross-cutting group affiliations, are seen to be vital to the development of democracy (Kornhauser 1960, Lipset 1960). This idea also underlies earlier discussions of political cleavage and political

culture (Almond and Verba 1963). Yet, "the proliferation of autonomous associations and steady increases in the cognitive mobilization of the mass have seriously undetermined the foundations of authoritarian rule" (Shin, 1994:152). In recent years, the interest of scholars in the connections between associations and democracy has increased (Fung, 2003). The emergent idea is that attendance of associations creates opportunities for citizens and groups to participate directly in governance.

These are associations that enrol a wide range of people of different social backgrounds and interests. The participation in associations, then, appears to be fundamental and essential to build social capital (Putnam, 1993:173). In a similar way, "virtues and viability of a democracy depend on the robustness of its associational life" (Warren, 2001: 3).

But, participation in associations is not the only indicator of social capital. In fact, there are a number of facets of social capital and these are themselves interdependent.

Another relevant concept is *trust* which is held to be an "essential component of social capital" because it facilitates the cooperation necessary for coordination within society (Putnam, 1993, p. 170).

Raiser (1999) argues that "extended trust" is fundamental in the transition countries in order to permit the evolution of the economic system, and we add, of the democracy.

Putnam's social capital thesis has been subjected to any number of scholarly responses, retorts, and replications (Tarrow, 1997), but the fact remains that this theoretical position is lauded by most, although if it's compared with the other forms of capital (financial, human), social capital is less tangible, and hence more difficult to measure.

In this analysis we consider trust and associational life as indicators of social capital.

Measures of social capital

Social capital, in its complexity and indeterminateness, brings to the mind more a nebula than a clean horizon. Setting aside the metaphor, it's clear that it is necessary to deepen the concept in order to operationalize it. To do this, we can use the data from the World Values Study for the year 1995.

The first concept considered is the trust because it plays a central role in modern society and its politics. As Simmel (1950: 326), echoed by other authors (Arrow, 1972:357; Ostrom, 1990; Putnam 1993, 1995, 2000; Fukuyama 1995; Warren 1999) says, 'trust is one of the most important synthetic forces within society'.

In the countries considered on average 21,6% of the respondents trust other people.

High levels of trust are registered in Bulgaria, where the percentage of people that "trust in the others" is 29,5%, while the lowest level of trust appears in Slovenia where 14,5% trust others.

Tab. 1 Trust in the other (% values)

	Careful	Trusted	Total (N)
Bulgaria	70,5	29,5	100,0 (888)
Estonia	78,5	21,5	100,0 (999)
Latvia	77,8	22,2	100,0 (1.160)
Lithuania	78,1	21,9	100,0 (981)
Poland	82,1	17,9	100,0 (1.089)
Slovenia	84,5	14,5	100,0 (991)

Source: Our analysis on the dataset of ICPR 2790

The low level of "trust in others" confirms the problems of democracies in transition (Bielasiak 2002; Morlino 1998) and demonstrates the long road that eastern countries must tread to reach a satisfying level of democratization. (How do these averages compare to Western European states? Are they really different?)

Besides, considering that the trust is based on the similarity of currently salient values (Earle, Cvetkovick, 1995) we can say that the level of trust measured across nations, when considered with the legacy of Communism, shows a large effect on cul-

ture, in terms of distrust respect of the past. We cannot deepen this aspect in the absence of indicators, but we cannot exclude it in terms of effect. In fact, as Inglehart (1997) says, trust is a key component of pro-democratic attitudes that lay the foundation for popular constitutions. In other words, it is impossible have trust whereas the concept of democracy was unfamiliar.

As Toqueville (1968) said, the associative network of a country constitutes a specific element to create good social capital: in associations the citizens learn how to stay together, to participate in group experiences and, above all, to work for the common good.

In methodological terms, we have operationalized the concept of social capital in three indicators that represent the standards indicators of associations (Bellucci, 2001):

- the membership rate, which measures the quota of people enrol at least to one association;
- the density rate, which measures multi-membership;
- the working membership, which is the percentage of people that take part actively in associative life.

As expected, membership in voluntary associations varies quite considerably across countries, but a *file rouge* cuts transversally across all the countries: the affiliation to Union and Party.

The overall average for membership is equal to 37,2% of the citizens that in these countries being a member of at least one association. The high is 69,9 % in Slovenia, and the low is 10,8% in Poland.

In general, excluding Slovenia, the map of affiliation in associations draws that although positive experiences to resist communist authority don't feed an interest for apolitical associations. While the Union continues to play a key role in representing social interests and mediating between the civil and the political, the low

levels of party association do register significance distrust and a sense of fed up

with politics and politicians, as the case of Poland shows (Ekiert, Kubrik, 1999).

Tab. 2 Membership rate (% values)

Source: Our analysis on the dataset of ICPR 2790

	No member	Church	Sport	Arts	Unions	Party	Envirom.	Profes.	Charity	Others	Total (N)
Bulgaria	74,9	2,5	2,1	1,4	10,4	3,9	0,4	1,9	1,2	1,4	100,0 (1.072)
Estonia	57,3	7,8	6,5	7,1	10,4	1,0	1,4	4,3	1,9	2,4	100,0 (1.021)
Latvia	54,3	7,6	4,6	4,5	11,7	1,9	1,2	8,3	1,9	4,2%	100,0 (1.200)
Lithuania	68,7	9,2	3,6	4,4	5,5	2,2	1,3	2,4	1,6	1,2	100,0 (927)
Poland	89,2	0,0	0,0	0,0	9,6	1,1	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	100,0 (1.153)
Slovenia	30,1	10,8	7,2	3,4	17,8	2,3	1,2	7,1	7,3	12,8	100,0 (1.007)

Tab. 3 Multimembership rate (% values)

	1	2	3	4 and more	Total(N)
Bulgaria	77,7	12,6	5,2	4,5	100,0 (269)
Estonia	67,7	22,2	6,9	3,2	100,0 (436)
Latvia	63,8	23,7	8,7	3,8	100,0 (549)
Lithuania	73,8	17,2	4,9	4,1	100,0 (325)
Poland	96,8	3,2	,0	,0	100,0 (124)
Slovenia	50,7	28,8	12,4	8,1	100,0 (704)

Source: Our analysis on the dataset of ICPR 2790

Tab. 4 Average Multimembership rate

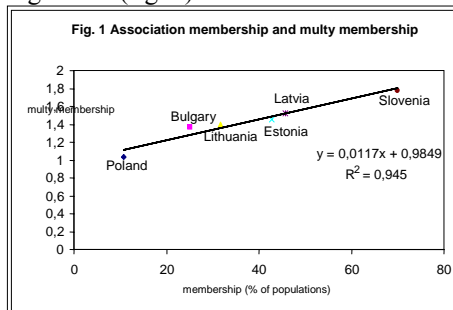
	Mean	Standard Deviation	N
Bulgaria	1,3643	,77819	269
Estonia	1,4564	,76138	436
Latvia	1,5264	,80924	549
Lithuania	1,3908	,76047	325
Poland	1,0323	,17740	124
Slovenia	1,7784	,95222	704

Source: Our analysis on the dataset of ICPR 2790

We think this lack of affiliation to association is more structural than individual and is strongly related to the level of democracy (Paxton, 2002): if the political system doesn't allow them the possibility to exist, it is very difficult to expect a high number of associations, and consequently, of members. Nevertheless, if we exclude

the Unions and Parties from analysis and focus our attention on non-political voluntary associations, the Church (6,1%) is the voluntary association of greatest appeal, which shows that the work of the churches in the countries analyzed continues to bear weight in the process of democratization.

From the prospective of social capital theory, to be a member of an association is undoubtedly less relevant than the existence of an associative network where the people are inserted. In fact it is important to stay in associative networks, to make possible that the norms of social capital self-generate (trust and reciprocity; Newton, 1998:169-187). Yet, multi-membership also encourages the muting of extreme views favouring various relationships between civil society and democracy (Rueschemeyer, et al., 1998). The analysis of variance¹ shows that in the countries analyzed there are significance differentiations in terms of multi-membership: country where the multi-membership is more consistent is Slovenia where the 8,1% of people that are members of association attend four or more associations (tab. 3), while the Poland, as showed before, remain the country where, probably, the political system have even a weight on the effective lift off of voluntary associations. The data doesn't explain the dynamics and the criteria by which the people choose associations, but considering the relationship between membership and multi-membership, we can say that more membership equals more multi-membership, especially when the first one registers at a high level (fig. 1).



Source: Our analysis on the dataset of ICPR 2790
A necessary condition for development of social capital is interaction between the members. In fact, if participation is lim-

¹ The F is 19,520, while df's are 5

ited to just the inscription, in formal terms, then both the activities of the association and the results of inscription itself – communication, socializations and so on – are weak.

The most associative activism is registered in Latvia (9,9%) and Estonia (9,3%), while Poland has the lowest percentage of associative activism (tab. 5).

Tab. 5 Working membership (% values)

	No member	Passive	Active	Total (N)
Bulgaria	74,9	16,9	8,2	100,0 (1.072)
Estonia	57,3	33,4	9,3	100,0 (1.021)
Latvia	54,3	35,8	9,9	100,0 (1.200)
Lithuania	67,8	23,9	8,3	100,0 (1.009)
Poland	89,2	8,3	2,5	100,0 (1.153)
Slovenia	30,1	54,6	15,3	100,0 (1.153)

Source: Our analysis on the dataset of ICPR 2790

The values for activism are relative to the total number of members. To understand where activism is more evident we need to compute another measure: the ratio between active and passive members.

In fact, considering this ratio it is possible to understand that even where we can found high levels of membership or multi-membership, there is not always significance activism inside the association. An exemplificative case is Slovenia, where the ratio of active to passive members is 0,28, while Lithuania, the country where the associative life is more active, has a ratio of 0,35 (tab. 6).

Tab. 6 Working membership rate (odds ratio)

Bulgaria	0,05
Estonia	0,28
Latvia	0,28
Lithuania	0,35
Poland	0,30
Slovenia	0,28

Source: Our analysis on the dataset of ICPR 2790

Considering this first analysis we can confirm the heavy weight that the dictatorship has had on social capital, but in the same time we can say that the results are comfortable especially if we consider: on one hand, the period of the study (1995-1997), and on the other hand, that these countries have reached democracy in the 1990s. This is not just a hope, but a certainty, because the results that Barnes reports in a study on the same Eastern countries, comparing two specific wave of research (1990-1992 and 1998-2001), shows that the level of social capital is low just for structural and not individual factors. Considering all the indicators, which is the country where social capital is greatest?

To answer this question we have explored the relationship among the indicators of social capital using a factor analysis (tab. 7).

The factor analysis was done twice because the first time (Tab. 7) the concept of trust and the indicators of associative life didn't have a relationship in the Eastern countries. For this reason, we will consider them in a differentiated way, because we cannot forget that trust is a good lubricant for corporate efficiency

The second factor analysis' results confirmed the power explicative of this analysis in terms of variance (85,7%) and its high validity and reliability with an Alpha of Cronbach of,8542.

Tab. 7 Factor and reliability analysis of social capital

	Fist analysis	Second analysis
Trust	,062	
Membership	,867	,869
Multimembership	,970	,970
Working association	,934	,935
% variance	64,2	85,7
Alpha of Cronbach		,8542

Extraction method: Principal Component analysis transformed with varimax rotations

Source: Our analysis on the dataset of ICPR 2790

Considering the three indicators as a cumulative index we can see that among the countries considered, Slovenia is the country that has the most social capital (2,845), while Poland (,350) has the least. Although the range is very large, we cannot reject the null hypothesis that the countries have different variances (Leven Test, sig. ,000). So there are differences among the countries in terms of social capital (Anova, sig. ,000; tab. 8). But, some measures appear very close to solicited to go deep in this relationship.

Tab. 8 Social capital Index (% values)

	Mean	Standard deviation	N
Bulgaria	,938	1,70788	1.072
Estonia	1,583	1,94237	1.021
Latvia	1,716	1,96298	1.200
Lithuania	1,162	1,84956	927
Poland	,350	1,02166	1.153
Slovenia	2,845	2,11448	1.007
Total	1,415	1,95043	6.380

Source: Our analysis on the dataset of ICPR 2790

After this analysis, one first conclusion is the following:

- the level of trust in others in the Eastern countries is low;
- membership varies across the countries, although the range of variation has not been emphasized too much. Besides, two specific associations (unions and parties) are a peculiarity of the countries analyzed. In these terms, if we don't consider these two typologies of associations in our analysis, the differences in membership rate decrease considerably;
- it's not possible to draw a pattern of multi-membership, but we can say there is a strong linear relationship

- between membership and multi-membership;
- working membership appears far from a specific pattern of voluntary associations;
- social capital in Eastern countries is created more by associative behaviour than trust in others.

Democracy and Confidence in institutions

The gap in social capital between Eastern and Western Europe can be largely attributed to economic and institutional differences (Fidrmuc, Gerxhani, 2004). Putnam's (1993) and Fukuyama (1995) analyses of formal institutions have often been mentioned as important causes of different levels of social capital in developed countries or within a developed country itself (Fukuyama, 1995, Putnam et al., 1993). While, the concept of confidence in institutions seems to be very important if we consider that citizens in transition countries seem to have much higher esteem for their institutions (Rose, Mishler and Haerpfer, 1998).

Nevertheless, distrust in public institutions is thus one of the most pernicious legacies of Communism (Gati, 1996). Like Stiglitz (1996) describe, there are ways for governments to build trust in public institutions by offering dialogue and consulting power to members of the public over important policy changes.

From a methodological view, the institutions that give a major explanation about the confidence aren't apparent.

In fact:

- some authors considered just the public institutions, for example the parliament, the parties, the civil services, and so on (Orren, 1997, Dalton, 1999);
- others scholars used both the public and private institutions (for example: mass media, trade unions, church, and so on; Lipset & Schneider, 1983).

In this sense, confidence in institutions is measured considering attitudes towards the political system (system effect) that ensure the legitimacy of democracy (Almond & Verba, 1963), since, one of the goals of a new regime is to establish institutions that are acceptable, in terms of confidence, by comparing themselves with previous regimes (Rose, 1992). In a post-Communist country, most institutions of past regimes remain in place, so to compare institutions is determinant to understand how and how much confidence people have in the institutions representative of democracy (Welsh, 1996).

Beside confidence in institutions represents a good measure of democratic support: if the institutions represent the citizens, the people will have confidence in them only if they are deemed trustworthy. In this sense, as many scholars recognize, it's important to consider the democracy support in the analysis of democracy (Korberg, Clark, 1992).

Considering seven specific public institutions, that the institution in which people have more confidence is the armed forces, while regard the party and parliament, which in the collective imagination represented the past, the confidence level register a percentages equal to 17,1 and 33,2 (tab. 9).

Tab. 9: Confidence in institutions (great + quite)

	<i>Values %</i>
Armed Force	54,3
Legal System	41,7
Police	41,7
National Government	43,9
Party	17,1
Parliament	33,2
Civil Service	43,1

Source: Our analysis on the dataset of ICPR 2790

Other studies consulted present the same scenario: these values don't evidence anti-

political or anti-government attitudes, but just scepticism towards institutions that represent democracy (Rose, et al., 1998). Bulgaria is the country with the most confidence in the armed force (81,4%), followed by Poland (79,5%, tab. 10).

In Estonia the legal system receives the most confidence (61,7%), while in Latvia and Lithuania it is the civil service (44,1%; 41,0%). Particularly interesting is the case of Slovenia, where the confidence level is highest for police.

So, it is possible to understand the scenery in the countries analyzed is not very heterogeneity in terms of confidence. But the most interesting aspect is the fact that in any country the national government, the party or the parliament are the institutions in which there is the citizens' greatest confidence. If we think that these three

institutions represent, in Western Europe, the concept of democracy, it's easy to deduce that in the countries analyzed the scepticism could be a problem for the process of democratization. In fact considering the study of Rose *et al.* (1998:154), which considers some countries analyzed in this study (Slovenia, Poland and Bulgaria), the parliament, the national government and the parties are the first three public institutions that registered the highest values of distrust.

Tab. 10: Confidence in public institutions by country (great + quite)

	<i>Armed force</i>	<i>Legal system</i>	<i>Police</i>	<i>National Government</i>	<i>Party</i>	<i>Parliament</i>	<i>Civil Service</i>
Bulgaria	81,4	38,6	51,2	59,9	29,2	45,3	48,0
Estonia	47,9	61,7	50,9	50,2	23,2	43,8	60,9
Latvia	30,9	38,3	31,1	38,3	10,3	25,0	44,1
Lithuania	40,8	22,2	20,8	36,3	14,4	26,5	41,0
Poland	79,5	52,6	53,2	39,0	12,8	34,5	35,1
Slovenia	44,7	35,9	47,4	40,6	13,7	24,7	28,9

Source: Our analysis on the dataset of ICPR 2790

The confidence in institutions is also a good indicator of democracy support.

In fact *cultural approaches* measures support indirectly based in the assumption that democracy requires a civic culture in which citizens manifest such basic values as trust. The assumption is that societies with low levels of trust are poorly suited to the establishment of democratic institutions (Putnam, 1993).

To obtain a measure of democracy support we transform the confidence in each public institution in an index using the

factor analysis (Tab. 11), and controlling the scale obtained by reliability analysis. The factor analysis presents acceptable results (chi-square=829,790; df=14), and the reliability of the scale is good (Alpha=,8280).

Tab. 11: Factor and reliability analysis of democracy support

Armed Force	,566
Legal System	,652
Police	,689
National Government	,805

Party	,700
Parliament	,814
Civil Service	,697
% variance	50,1
Alpha of Cronbach	,8280

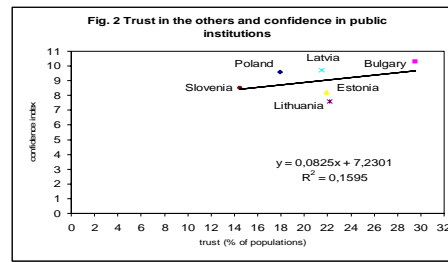
Extraction method: Principal Component analysis transformed with varimax rotations.

Source: Our analysis on the dataset of ICPR 2790

Confidence in institutions, obviously, demonstrates a good level of trust by the citizens represented: if there is trust on a generalized level probably there is confidence in institutions, although the reverse doesn't work well.

In fact, measuring this relationship with a polynomial regression model (fig. 2), the trust in others appears to be the predictor criteria useful to formulate a judgment on the public institutions, and, consequently, the base element to increase the level of democratization. Democratic societies are trusting societies. Societies have higher levels of trust in turn have institutions that function better. As Rothstein (2001) says: "If people believe that the institutions that are responsible for handling 'treacherous' behaviour act in fair, just and effective manners, and if they also believe that other people think the same of these institutions, then they will also trust other people."

In this sense if we withheld trust in people until we had confidence that they were in fact trustworthy, then government might be able to generate faith in others because confidence in government is contingent upon our evaluations of how well our leaders have done their jobs (Fenno, 1978; Bianco; 1994).



Source: Our analysis on the dataset of ICPR 2790

Democratization, social capital and confidence in institutions: an explicative model

The measure of democratization level across the countries considered in this work is that of Freedom House (1997), which represents a synthesis of cultural differences, diverse national interests, and varying levels of economic development (laws, political, and economic factors and actual violations, or repressive actions). The rating is structured on a continuum that represents the hierarchical list of the countries, from the first, which have lower scores and represent the highest level of democracy, to the last with high scores and the lowest level of democracy. In this analysis we apply a structural equation model, reading the standardize values, that consent to understand the weight of each variables on the democracy level as well as the importance of the same aspects. We consider the variables as indicated and we analyze some socio-demographic aspects (age and education), in order to give an answer to some questions that were generated during the redaction of this paper.

The first one is: what is the relationship between trust and democracy?

Many authors support the idea that governments produce democracy (Choen, 1997, Levi, 1998, 1999; Offe, 1999) assuming that democracy is explicative of the trust.

We disagree with this causal relationship because the democracy cannot produce trust, but vice versa. Trust can produce confidence in the governments. Inghleart

(1999) and Uslaner (2002) say that democracy and trust go together, but there is a little evidence that democratization leads to greater trust.

Our analysis confirms this tendency (fig. 3): the more people trust in others, the greater the increase in the level of democratization ($B=,15$). But when we consider the inverse relationship, the value is negative ($B=-,21$): evidence that, on one side, democratization doesn't produce trust, and on the other side, there is not a conceptual base to support the idea that increasing the democratization decreases trust in others. Others studies on the same countries come to the same conclusion in terms of a direct relationship (Barnes, 2004).

In other words, like Uslaner (1999), we admit the superiority of social trust over participatory behaviour arguing that "civic networks may enhance social life, but this "social connectedness" ... is distinct from – and secondary to – moral values" (Uslaner 1999: 122).

The trust contributes to explaining social capital and confidence in institutions too. Regarding confidence in institutions, the low value of beta ($,01$) is explicative of low or scarce trust of people towards politicians. As Earle (1995) said, while the social trust is based in the here and now, confidence in institutions is based on past experience. In this sense, the low but positive contribution, in explicative terms, of the trust in others on confidence in institutions, which is an indirect indicator of democracy support, is evident that citizens are begging to remove the shadow of the past regime (communism) in fiduciary terms.

As explained in the preceding pages, the trust doesn't have a strong connection with social capital. In fact, the results of factorial analysis suggest keeping it out from the social capital index (Tab. 8). This doesn't indicate that trust has no relationship with social capital, but just that

in the Eastern countries the composition of social capital assumes a different form. Nevertheless, trust contributes to create social capital ($\beta=,04$).

Regarding the social capital as an extension of associative life, some authors give evidence that it appears oriented towards the loyalties and resources of their membership (Howard, 2003) and also creates a living environment independent of the public sphere (Geremek 1992). Social capital has a good relationship both with the democratic support (confidence in institutions) and with the democratic level.

As Verba and Nye say, organizations increase "the potency of the citizenry vis-à-vis the government in a number of ways. Organizations through their paid officials speak *for* their members.... or an individual can gain access to the government *through* the organization, or organizations may have an impact on political life in a society through the influence they have on the participatory activities of their members. Citizens may participate directly *because* of their affiliation with an organization.... A rich political participant life may rest on a rich associational life" (1972:175).

Citizens with a high level of education see in the social capital a good medium ($\beta=,05$) to participate in the social and political life. Along with education ($\beta=,15$) having employment is linked with the democratic level. ($\beta=,04$). In this sense, cultural opening (high level of education) and economic stability (occupation) are two good hinge elements to increase the democratic level.

The third aspect is the confidence in public institutions. This indicator, constructed using just public institutions, as we said before, is an indirect indicator of democracy support. In this sense it measures the (specific) support for democracy through the confidence in institutions.

From this analysis a negative relationship emerges between democracy support and democratic level.

In analysis on the Western countries in the last years few years, popular confidence for political institutions appears to be declining (Pharr et al., 2000). The same situation is registered in the Eastern countries where the relationship between democracy support and level of democracy is negative (beta=0,8) evidencing that democracy support and level of democracy don't go hand in hand.

If we consider on one hand, that the distrust for politicians or parties is a peculiarity of many eastern countries (Schmitter, 1994) as our data confirm especially towards the party and parliament, and on the other hand, that diffuse support (legitimization) and specific support (in this case the confidence in institutions) represent the viability of a political system (Easton, 1975), we can understand that slow reform may cause disillusionment in the citizenry, and often slows the democracy consolidate process (Waldrom More, 1999).

Regarding two socio-economic variables, education and professional condition, a high level of education and job stability are good predictors of democracy support, as other analysis confirms (Waldrom More, 1999), as well as democratic level.

Conclusions

In this paper we've considered the relationship between democratic level and three specific aspects: trust, social capital and democracy support.

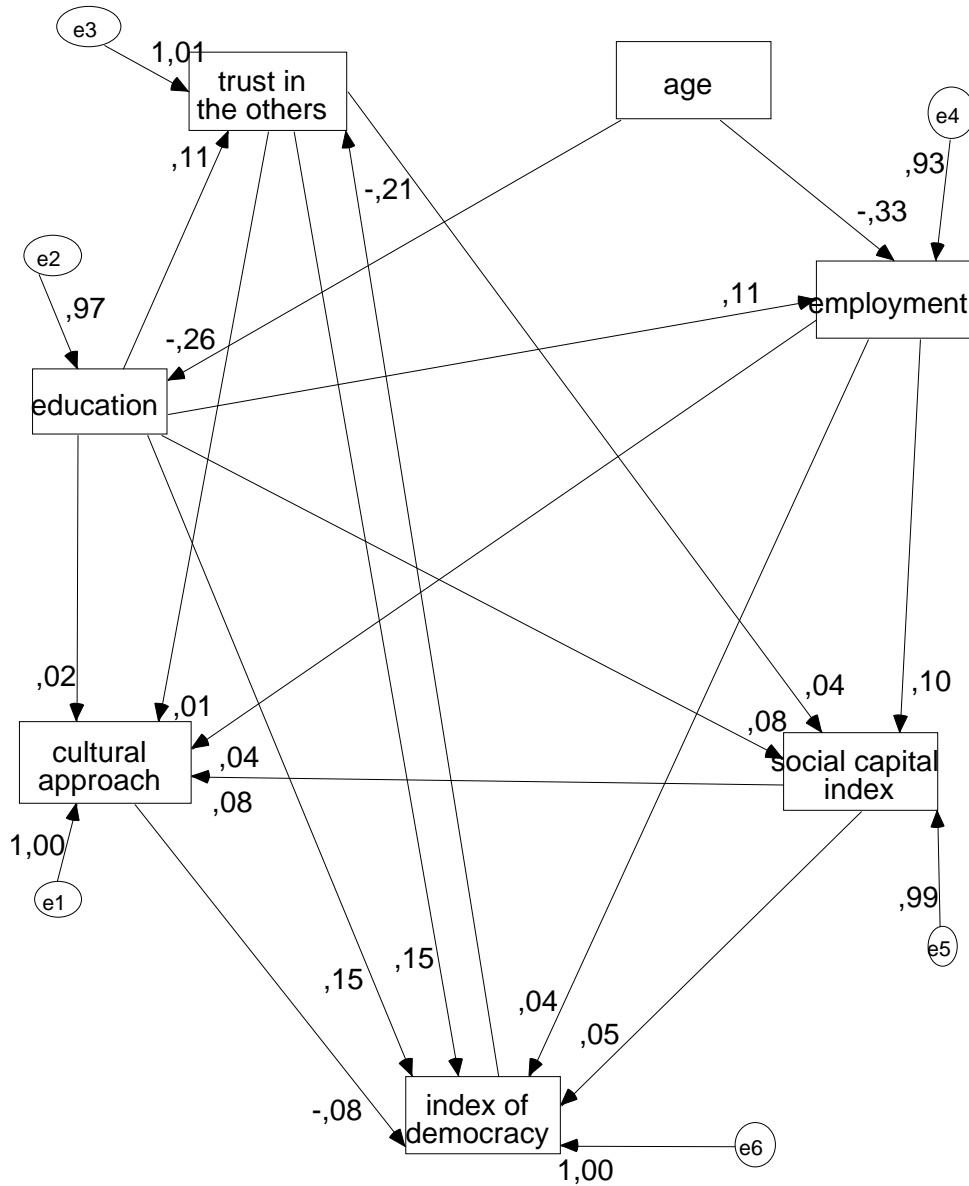
Trust has a direct effect on the democratic level but not the contrary, confuting the

position of many authors, like Levi, and others. In fact the direct and indirect effects, in measurement terms, in our model, show the fallacy of the idea that democracy can construct trust among citizens.

The social capital, although it has had many critics especially when considered in relation to West countries, presents an appreciable explicative power both in terms of confidence in institutions and democratic level. This result confirms its importance in the process of democratization, and at the same time disconfirms the Dowley and Silver's (2001) analysis, that showed a failure to find relation between measures of social capital and democratization in eastern countries. The use of just "membership rate" as an indicator of social capital, as in Dowley and Silver (2001), is not sufficiently reliable. In this sense, complex measures, as is social capital, constructed on just indicators give misleading results.

The negative relationship between confidence in institutions and democratic level shows the imbalance between expectations of the citizens and outcomes received. It's clearly demonstrated by the low level of trust that the people have in institutions, especially party, parliament and legal system. Thus, it is the task of public institutions to work hard to create consensus among the citizens.

Fig. 3 Democratization in Eastern Countries



Standardized estimates
 chi-square=2,808 df=4 p-value=,590
 gfi=1,000 agfi=,999 rmsea=,000
 nfi=,998 ifi=1,001 pclose=1,000

Appendix – Description of Variables used in structural equation model¹

Trust in the others (v27)

Questioning wording: *Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted or that you can't be too careful in dealing with people?*

The modality of response, after recoded was the following: 0 Can't be too careful - 1 Most people can be trusted

Age (v216)

Questioning wording: *This means you are ___ years old.*

Education (v217)

Questioning wording: *What is the highest educational level that you have attained?*

Employment (v220)

Questioning wording: *Are you employed now or not? *IF YES: About how many hours a week? If more than one job: only for the main job.* The modality of response, after recoded, was the following: 0 Not employed 1 Employed

Cultural approach (v136 v137 v141 v142 v143 v144 v145)

Questioning wording: *I am going to name a number of organizations. For each one, could you tell me how much confidence you have in them: is it a great deal of confidence, quite a lot of confidence, not very much confidence or none at all?* The modality of response, after recoded was the following: 4 a great deal of confidence, 3 quite a lot of confidence, 2 not very much 1 confidence or none at all

Social capital index (v28 v29 v30 v31 v32 v33 v34 v35 v36)

Question wording: *Now I am going to read off a list of voluntary organizations; for each one, could you tell me whether you are an active member, an inactive member or not a member of that type of organization?*

Index of democracy

The rating of Freedom House (1997) is used and recoded in mode that at the maximum level it expresses the highest level of democracy.

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¹ In the analysis we don't have considered the missing values

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Societal Accountability and Democratization in the Philippines

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ABSTRACT:The multifaceted interpretation of the 2001 People Power Revolt illustrated the skepticism with regard to the progress of democratization in the Philippines. However, it is also important to view it as an event that has put the issues of accountability to the fore. It examines the concept of “societal accountability” as a response to the problems faced by the legal-institutional mechanisms of accountability. It applies this in the resignation, impeachment, and ouster (RIO) campaign of the former President Joseph Estrada. It argues that societal accountability was exercised through three strategies: the legal process of impeachment, the utilization of media, and the mobilization of different civil society organizations through protest actions. The paper concludes by enumerating its implications on democratization in the Philippines.

Introduction

Since the First People Power Revolt in 1986, the Philippines has embarked on a process of “redemocratization”. While it has passed the conventional “turn-over test” (Huntington, 1991) of the transfer of political power and has relatively remained politically stable, doubts continue to pervade the analysis of scholars and observers, particularly with regard to its prospects for democratic consolidation. There is a consensus that much leaves to be desired in terms of the maturity and efficacy of its democratic political institutions. It is not therefore contested that the Philippines suffers from severe “democracy deficits” on both the dimensions of institutions and politics required in a democracy.

The multifaceted interpretation of the second People Power Revolt on January 2001 illustrated the skepticism with regard to the progress of democratization in the Philippines. Some have heralded it as a triumph for democracy, indicating that without popular support, the legitimacy of any government is questionable (Doronila, 2001). However, most international observers have claimed

that it was a “mob rule” in action and therefore a not so good indication of the overall condition of the country’s democratic institutions and processes (Putzel, 2001; Burton, 2001; Spaeth, 2001).

While this paper believes that the event in 2001 displayed both the best and the worst of Philippine democracy, it takes a different position in the sense that it has put the issues of accountability and corruption to the fore. On the one hand, the resort to “extra-constitutional” means to oust an inept and corrupt president is a manifestation of the immaturity of Philippine political institutions to effectively exercise accountability - a principle inexorably linked to democracy. The aborted impeachment process is only the culmination of the severe deficits that exists between formal mechanisms of accountability and their ability to fulfill their mandate. On the other hand, it manifested the Filipino people’s disgust and disappointment to a popularly elected president who committed grave acts of corruption and abuse of authority - a disease that has plagued the country for decades.

In 1998, Joseph Ejercito Estrada, a politician who started as a movie actor, was elected the 13th president of the Republic of the Philippines in a relatively overwhelming fashion, being able to get 40 percent of the national vote. Much of his electoral victory could be attributed to the support he received from the *masa* (masses), which constitutes to more than two-thirds of the population. Estrada electoral campaign slogan, *Erap Para Sa Mahirap* [Erap for the Poor] basically summarized his heavily populist political platform - a focus on the needs and issues that concerned the Filipino poor previously neglected by his predecessors. Despite being criticized for his ineptness, incompetence, and moral foundations, many gave him a chance to prove otherwise. A lot of people trusted him to genuinely contribute to the upliftment of the plight of millions living in poverty. However, not even halfway to his six-year term, Estrada was ousted through a peaceful revolt on the grounds of corruption and cronyism. This happened after the political institutions mandated to make Estrada accountable - the impeachment process - proved to be incapable to deliver on its mandate.

There seems to be consensus in the literature regarding the inability or failure of the democracies to address certain gaps and deficits in fostering more accountable democratic regimes (O'Donnell, 1994; Zakaria, 1997; Diamond, 2000). According to O'Donnell (1999), accountability has two dimensions: horizontal and vertical. The horizontal dimension is concerned with the existence of a system of checks and balances and with due process in government decision-making. It rests upon the assumption that government has the ability and willingness to restrain itself ("accountability from within"). However, the horizontal mechanisms of accountability in the form of the ombudsman, anti-corruption agencies and

courts, legislative oversight committees, and others often do not possess sufficient independence to insulate themselves from undue political influence and the adequate resources to gather information and act effectively upon complaints.

There is also a vertical dimension that focuses on electoral mechanisms or other direct means ("accountability from above"). In any democracy, elections are the prime mechanism of ensuring accountability of political leaders to the citizens. However, even if one assumes that the electoral exercise is fairly free, clean, honest, and competitive (which in itself is already problematic in the Philippine context), there is still the danger of its efficacy as a vertical mechanism of accountability. Aside from the fact that it is a one shot deal held very often, it is not easy for individual citizens to coordinate the orientation of their votes. Moreover, there is the problem of inadequate information as citizens may not be able to sufficiently assess the performance of their political leaders or be aware of the relevant elections issues so important in making good choices at the polls (Stokes, 1999).

This paper shares the recognition that while these limitations on traditional accountability issues exist, a nascent form of generating accountability is emergent in democratizing countries such as the Philippines. It is grounded on a "growing recognition of the significant role of civil society and independent media in overseeing political authorities, exercising control over governments, and fostering democratic governance". Borrowing the concept of Smulovitz and Peruzzotti (2000), this paper wishes to focus on the notion of "societal accountability" as an appropriate response to the problems faced by the legal-institutional mechanisms of accountability as manifested in the campaign against President Estrada. It will discuss the issues put forward by societal actors and

document their strategies from the call for his resignation until the cessation of the impeachment trial.

This paper argues that societal accountability to a great extent was exercised in this case since civil society and independent media organizations coordinated among themselves and effectively used a combination legal, mobilizational, and mediatic strategy. The legal strategy was exercised through the filing of the impeachment complaint thereby activating state institutions mandated to elicit accountability. The issues against Estrada were disseminated through massive and strategic mobilization of protest actions and other forms of collective action across the country organized by civil society groups and with the help of media exposés and the use of information and communications technology (ICT). This paper claims that the advent of societal accountability through the empowerment of civil society to participate in political processes has significant implications for the process of democratization in the Philippines. While societal accountability can never be alternatives for effective and properly working institutions of accountability, it can complement for their inadequacies and limitations.

This paper is divided into several sections. As a proper background, this paper will discuss the concept of societal accountability. It will then examine the issues raised against Estrada that caused the initiation of the actions of civil society groups which will also be identified. The paper will then document the various strategies of the relevant societal actors. Finally, it will explore the possible implications of societal accountability in the future of democratization in the Philippines.

*“Accountability through Other Means”:
The Concept of Societal Accountability*

One of the key distinctions of modern representative democracies from other

types of regimes is the existence of a framework of legal and political institutions oriented to ensure the responsiveness and accountability of deputized agents. The idea that citizens are able to make certain demands on their political leaders and made them accountable for misbehavior could be considered as one of the incentives that democracy could provide. As democracy implies that those elected are to be the custodians of the people’s authority, it requires the existence of institutions or mechanisms of accountability such that the authority given to those elected will not be abused or result in unresponsive governments. Most authors agree that the essence of the concept of accountability is how to regulate and control the authority given by the electorate to those who are elected (Schedler, 1999).

Conventional typologies on how to hold government accountable comprises the notions of political and legal accountability, wherein the former is grounded on the ability of citizens to elicit accountability through their vote (i.e. elections) and the latter into the ability of laws and institutional mechanisms to impose accountability (e.g. constitution, or checks and balances) (March and Olsen, 1995). However, a better way to conceptualize the means to impose accountability is through the use of “spatial metaphors”. The concept of horizontal accountability refers to the operation of an “intra-state system of oversight oriented to control or punish actions or omissions by agents or agencies of the state that may be considered unlawful” (O’Donnell, 1999: 38). Vertical accountability implies the existence of an agent of control external to the government mainly via the electorate. Elections represent a “society-anchored agency of control, granting citizens the right to periodically punish or reward elected representatives with their vote” (Peruzzotti and Smulovitz, 2005: 6). Such

a classification also stresses the direction of the accountability relationship as well as the arena where the accountability exchanges take place.

Peruzzotti and Smulovitz introduced a type of accountability that is neglected by current scholarship and has the potential to play a complementary role in fostering accountability in its legal and political aspects through compensating for the many built-in defects of traditional mechanisms. Societal accountability is defined as “a nonelectoral, yet vertical mechanism of control that rests on actions of a multiple array of citizen’s associations and movements and on the media”. Its agents monitor the actions of public officials, expose governmental wrongdoing, and can activate the operation of horizontal agencies. It employs both institutional (legal actions or claims before oversight/horizontal agencies) and non-institutional (social mobilizations and media exposés) means (Peruzzotti and Smulovitz, 2005: 9).

Societal accountability addresses some of the limitations of electoral and horizontal mechanisms. First, “unlike electoral mechanisms, societal accountability can be exercised between elections and does not depend upon fixed calendars. Second, it is activated ‘on demand’ and can be directed toward the control of single issues, policies, or functionaries. Third, it is not a reactive type of fostering accountability since it can oversee the performance of politicians while making policy. Fourth, unlike electoral and horizontal controls, actors that use societal mechanisms can perform watchdog functions without the need for special majorities or constitutional entitlements. Fifth, the sanctions of societal mechanisms may not be formal or mandatory, but they are symbolic through incurring reputational costs (9-10). This is extremely significant in democracies since politicians rely on the votes of the electorate for their political survival.

There are three interrelated strategies employed by civil society in the exercise of societal accountability. First, there is the *juridical or legal strategy*. It entails the submission of societal actors of legal claims or of legally framed petitions to the courts or to other accountability agencies. Societal mechanisms are able to control since they can activate horizontal agencies and force them to intervene in disputes that the government may want to avoid or ignore. Working within the legal framework, societal demands for accountability can have the seal of legitimacy and therefore operate and respect democratic procedures and processes (Peruzzotti and Smulovitz, 2002: 9). Second, there is the *mobilizational strategy*. Control can be achieved if organized societal actors are able to call attention by exposing and denouncing perceived wrongdoings. Exposés bring issues to light in ways that the citizens can relate to, help put them on the public agenda and as a result, the number of matters for which public officials can be held responsible increases. The third is the *media strategy* which is the reliance on the potential of media to transmit the claims and issues to a wider audience increasing both the intensity and extensity of abuses of authority. Societal accountability requires visibility and media is the most important instrument to achieve this goal. It is argued that successful imposition of societal accountability depends upon the careful utilization and coordination of the three strategies. For example, “the media follows and reports about the organization and mobilization of civil society; civil society informs and is informed by media; and, at the same time, it activates legal actions and forces state institutions to take up once-neglected problems” (16-17).

Issues of Accountability: Estrada’s Cronyism, Competence Deficit and Corruption

Analysts have argued that Estrada was the president that would have had the best opportunity to be insulated from corruption. His popularity and charisma made it possible for him to win the presidency without too many political entanglements. His direct appeal to the masses added to his “winnability”. Thus, Estrada represented the first opportunity to escape the vicious cycle of patronage and clientelism in Philippine politics. This implied that that Estrada could win without striking too many bargains and special arrangements (Laquian and Laquian, 2002).

While corruption maybe the overriding issue, Estrada was also accused of living an opulent and grandiose lifestyle, sometimes unfit for a public official elected to serve his country. And the means to materializing this lifestyle unfortunately were the use of public coffers like the untimely but costly renovation of the presidential yacht and residence (Doronila, 2001: 27-29). According to his cabinet members and friends, he is also known for having a “second shift” which refers to the nocturnal gatherings of Estrada and his well-known cronies infamously known as his “Midnight Cabinet”, (not in the parliamentary sense) composed of his drinking and gambling mates. The members possessed awesome political leverage as they could influence policymaking through unsolicited advices to the President, while not being subjected to accountability, unlike official Cabinet members (Laquian and Laquian, 2002).

It is of complete irony that while Estrada distanced himself from traditional elite politicians or *trapos* and declared an explicit war on corruption, his short-lived administration was to be engulfed by a wave of corruption scandals. As indicated by the evidences introduced during the impeachment trial and those collected by the successor government to back the criminal charges of economic plunder, the

deposed president allegedly amassed at least Php10 billion (US\$200 million) in cash and other assets. Transparency International (TI), an international anti-corruption nongovernmental organization (NGO), placed him among the Top 10 Global Corrupt Leaders of all time.

The extent of corruption allegations against Estrada spanned from the systematic centralization of all illegal gambling “kickbacks” or “rents” (Hutchcroft, 1998) and exacting percentages from taxes to the manipulation of the country’s banking and stock market to favor his kith and kin (de Dios, 2001; Pascual and Lim, 2001). The President also lied about his personal worth in his Statement of Assets and Liabilities (SAL), a compulsory document annually accomplished by all government officials. All of these were incorporated in the impeachment complaint filed against him by civil society organizations and opposition politicians.

Perhaps the “invincibility thesis” could partly explain why Estrada allegedly was able to commit these acts. Achieving a convincing victory against his opponents, the President believed he wielded tremendous power that became his leverage not only to implement controversial policies but allegedly to embark on a feast of abusing power and plundering the state treasury. He interpreted that his electoral victory was a “blank pass” that gave him free rein to do everything as he pleased, even if it meant being biased to friends or kin or jeopardizing the public good.

Moreover, Estrada was able to get away with being held accountable because he inherited a system where political institutions are weak and immature. He himself did not bother to contribute to strengthening these institutions; on the contrary, he even aggravated their condition (Abueva, 2001). Both political and economic institutions that were given the power to check presidential power

could only watch as Estrada exercised his tremendous power over them. One key factor would have been his power of appointment. Estrada had sealed his impunity from particular acts as he appointed his own "henchmen" in government. With such collusion, accountability from state institutions could not be realized unless appointed individuals breathe life into them. Furthermore, given the network of complicity and patronage that crosses between independent and co-equal branches, the operation of the principle of checks and balances was virtually impaired. This facilitated Estrada's survival or escape from any form of accountability, even when being plainly answerable - explaining or justifying his decisions or behavior - to the public (Arugay, 2004a).

Estrada has apparently mastered the craft of impunity during the first part of his administration. As the mechanisms instituted to ensure that Estrada would not go beyond the limits of the authority vested in him by the people proved to be incapacitated, unconventional avenues and unorthodox means emerged to fill this vacuum. Estrada's perceived deficit in competence, his supposed penchant for cronyism, and the blatant allegations of corruption fed into the non-state sphere of the Philippine polity.

Exercising Societal Accountability: Strategies and Methods

Composed of a huge array of forces, the anti-Estrada campaign was a civil-society led, directed, and controlled initiative of various formations of social movements, NGOs, church and other faith-based organizations, professional associations, civic groups and others. There was the realization that it would take a tremendous amount of coalition-building and alliance-making in order to organize the campaign, achieve visibility nationwide, and succeed in exacting accountability from Estrada. In a way, this civil-society

initiative to obtain accountability had no precedent in post-Marcos Philippine politics. Some observers noted that the conglomeration was an achievement in itself as odds of uniting was almost next to impossible, given their diverse nature, motivations, and interests. A momentary convergence on getting rid of Estrada forced even groups that were located at opposite ends of the ideological-political spectrum to unite (Carroll, 2001).

The anti-Estrada campaign relied on the use and interaction of a range of strategies and tactics with the objective of raising the issue of corruption against Estrada nationwide and intensifying the call either for his resignation, impeachment, or ouster (RIO) from office. Most of the time, they are coordinated but each group is also given free rein to contribute to the ends of the campaign.

Exposing Estrada: The Role of Media

The early role of media in the anti-Estrada campaign took the form of uncovering a "political scandal". Through what is called "watchdog" journalism (Markovits and Silverstein, 1998; Thompson, 2000), the different allegations of corruption against the former President were revealed to the public. It gave substance, voice, and visibility to the suspected corrupt practices of Estrada that was significant in convincing political actors (legislators and bureaucrats), other sectors of civil society, and the Filipino citizenry at large.

It was not difficult convincing the constituents of civil society and in the end, even the politicians and the public at large on the veracity of Estrada's corruption scandals. As early as July 2000, the highly reputable Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism (PCIJ), an independent, nonprofit media agency that specializes in investigative reporting since 1989, has produced several exposés that substantiated the allegations of corruption against the President. The reports that it was able to

produce revealed that Estrada, with his relatives, owned multiple corporations not declared in his SAL. Others stories laid bare Estrada's questionable estate - multiple mansions in very posh and exclusive villages in the country allegedly given to his mistresses.

The PCIJ was able to exercise societal accountability at both the non-institutional and institutional levels. On the one hand, it was able to impose "social sanctions" on Estrada through the exposition of the various anomalies and instances of corruption that directly involved the President. It severely damaged the reputation of Estrada being the "champion of the masses" and deliverer of the poor. It raised questions on the sincerity of Estrada's aspiration to alleviate poverty when he used government funds and money derived through illegal means to aggrandize himself, his family, and friends. On the other hand, the more important contribution of the PCIJ to societal accountability was its impact at the institutional level. In the end, three of the reports were cited in the historic impeachment complaint filed by the House of Representatives against Estrada. The PCIJ's contribution to societal accountability must be situated in twin contexts on media and democracy in the Philippines. In the first place, the organization's reputation for producing critical journalism and institutional integrity made it a credible vehicle for denouncing Estrada's corrupt acts. Moreover, its nature as an alternative media organization gave it further credence to investigate Estrada without prejudice. The PCIJ is distinct from mainstream media organizations which are very much contoured by commercial interests or dictates of market consumers. Therefore, the case of the exposés against Estrada clearly supports the argument that it is not just media per se that contributes to societal accountability but a critical type known as "watchdog" journalism -

one that scrutinizes the activities and behavior of public officials guided by the protection and promotion of the public interest and the pursuit of transparency and accountability in governance.

In the end, the unraveling of the political scandal that involved the President attained high levels of reach and legitimacy that even political institutions such as congressional committees and the Ombudsman were activated to respond to the findings of the reports. From the perspective of civil society, the reports only validated their widely recognized perceptions, and galvanized them to coordinate efforts directed towards the President's accountability.

Activating Impeachment through Advocacy

Societal accountability claims that for initiatives of civil society and media to be formally recognized by state authorities, they must be anchored in juridical or legal processes. Patterned after the US model of presidential democracy, the Philippine political system provides that the only means to remove a president from office is through impeachment. While it was an option for civil society groups to disregard this constitutional process, as the political institutions assigned for this responsibility are captives of awesome presidential power, they still treaded the democratic route and gave a chance for political institutions to prove their efficacy. Thus, this legal strategy of impeaching Estrada best reflected the linkages between societal initiatives and the respect for the rule of law and constitutional democracy.

The main obstacle to the implementation of this strategy was the seeming difficulty of impeaching a public official. There exists the absence of a successful impeachment precedent of a president or any official for that matter in the country's political history. It was therefore unavoidable that there was skepticism with regard to the goal of the

civil society actors, especially when they engaged the opposition politicians in Philippine Congress. Moreover, it was apparently an insurmountable task because the impeachment procedure has to be initiated in the lower chamber of Congress through the consent of more than one-third of its members. This was perceived as unlikely, given the dominance of Estrada's coalition. No sane and rational representative would risk alienating himself or herself by supporting the impeachment of the Chief Executive, especially when the next congressional elections were just months away.

However, a crucial political opportunity, to use a concept in social movements and contentious politics theories (Tarrow, 1994), emerged when there was a dramatic shifting in the balance of forces that inevitably exposed the President's vulnerability. This was caused by the damning testimony by an Estrada crony regarding the extent of the President's alleged corrupt acts. The exposition of Estrada's incriminating activities greatly corroborated the charges in the complaint that the civil society groups were initially preparing. It also became a catalyst for other civil society groups to join the initiative and to constitute themselves as a united front demanding Estrada's accountability. As impeachment is a political process that requires the support of a definite number of legislators, the resignation of the leader of the lower chamber and others from the ruling coalition shifted the tide against Estrada and made his impeachment possible. Even if there was glaring evidence that could impeach the President, the ultimate decision rested in the legislature who had the sole authority to activate the mechanism. What could be observed is that to achieve its objectives, the legal strategy depended not only on the initiatives of civil society but also on

changes and dynamics within "political society".

The driving motivation for societal actors to pursue the President's impeachment despite the numerous obstacles they faced was adherence to the principles of democracy, particularly constitutionalism and the rule of law. It could be argued then that the legal strategy reflected the association between societal accountability and democratization. By becoming the initiators, advocates, and campaigners in the impeachment of Estrada, they were able to provide another angle in the highly politicized interplay between politicians. The active role of civil society prevented the demand for his accountability from becoming an all-traditional elite affair. It also refuted that it was all part of a conspiracy of the marginalized political opposition to sabotage Estrada and his administration. In the end, there was a semblance that it was a genuine, broad, and popular political movement to demand for his accountability.

Mobilizing for Accountability

While there were sporadic mobilizations exerted primarily by progressive civil society groups, the character and intensity of protest actions dramatically changed in the RIO campaign. Not only were they enjoined by a broad coalition of other forces, they were also conducted in a more organized manner with certain strategic objectives aimed at producing certain impacts but were all directed in exacting societal accountability. Civil society coalitions like the *Kongreso ng Mamamayang Pilipino II* (The Congress of the Filipino People II) or *Kompil II* (Velasco, 2003) and the Estrada Resign Movement (ERM) used the mobilizational strategy through concerted and coordinated protest and mass actions. By reviving the so-called "parliament of the streets" and giving it new dimensions and peculiarities, the organized collective

action was successful in its numerous objectives.

During the resignation phase of the campaign, the protest actions were aimed at sounding off “alarms” by pinpointing the issues against Estrada. These rallies reflected the intolerable problems of having a sitting president that had lost the moral credibility to govern. The protest actions had the objective of seeking Estrada’s resignation as the most practical way of resolving in what was seen as a national crisis of governance. The rallies were centered in Metro Manila but had its counterparts across other urban centers of the country. They were successful in exacting preliminary social sanctions towards the President as they elevated the issues in the public agenda. While Estrada had categorically denied his involvement in the charges thrown against him, this did not ameliorate the severe damage that was inflicted on his reputation and political capital.

Estrada’s counter-maneuvers to regain support for his administration stimulated the civil society coalitions to shift to another strategy and thereby change the nature and the goal of the mobilizations. With the impeachment process gaining ground in Congress, *Kompil II* and ERM focused their energies in becoming “societal watchdogs” of the historic trial that was intended not only to systematically present the evidence of Estrada’s wrongdoings but to even give the President a fighting chance to defend himself. It was also a stark reminder to the political institutions that they, the people, were actively monitoring the procedure. Indeed, the daily vigils and monitoring of the proceedings illustrated this resolve to monitor the trial and keep it under the keen and watchful eye of civil society.

The mobilizations were further modified to its final form when the impeachment trial failed to exact accountability from Estrada. Exogenous developments beyond

their control dramatically modified the political landscape and civil society organizations had no choice but to resort to mobilizations as the final form of collective action that could deliver the promise of accountability. Perhaps the final mobilizations that contributed to the ouster of Estrada could be interpreted as the venue for the public to participate in this process. As much as this was delegated to the political institutions of the country that should be representatives of the popular will, their failure had driven people to assume that task and confront the injustice that was inflicted because of the flagrant suppression of the truth by the loyal allies of the President.

The mobilizations not only intensified and heightened the consciousness of the issues of accountability against Estrada. They were also complemented by the power of media in magnifying the impacts of the mobilizations. The relentless coverage of all the mass actions in both print and broadcast media transmitted information and images of the vigilance of civil society to demand accountability from Estrada. The convergence of interests between civil society and mainstream media organizations was critical in being able to disseminate the frenzy of protest actions in the progression of the campaign to millions of Filipinos both at home and abroad, not to mention the global attention it was receiving from the international press. The series of collective action organized by the societal actors also ensured that the often ephemeral attention of the press would be maintained over an extended period of time requiring a great deal of organizational strength, cohesion, resources, and even ingenuity.

The Role of ICT: The Internet, the Television, and the Mobile Phone

To differentiate the case of the anti-Estrada campaign from previous political mobilizations in the country, the role of information and communications

technology must be highlighted. The case of the Internet-based initiative such as the *eLagda.com* was indicative of the power of technology as a means of political participation. What started as a reactive signature campaign aimed at pressuring Estrada to resign, the campaign of *eLagda.com* soon included active lobbying and participation into the protest actions in alliance with other civil society coalitions. What was novel was the inclusion of the politically apathetic middle class and the disempowered overseas Filipinos, working abroad which accounts for more than 10 percent of the population. Given the large number of Filipinos working and living outside the country, *eLagda.com* effectively provided them a channel to voice their claims and participate in the affairs of their country even if they were miles away. As they were disenfranchised politically, the campaign became their means of participation. In the end, *eLagda.com* campaign manifested that the Internet is not just a mechanism for information exchange regarding the issues confronted by Estrada but could be a potent weapon for societal accountability as it mobilized its constituencies separated by time, developed agendas for political participation and collective action, and generated public pressure on powerful politicians.

Another form of ICT was television considered as the main mode of mass media tapped into by Filipinos. As the country was about to undergo its first impeachment trial in history, networks grabbed the opportunity for it to broadcasted live into the television screens of Filipinos nationwide. It was seen as an exercise on political education, as ordinary citizens became acquainted with political and legal concepts and jargon (Enriquez, 2003). For almost a month, Filipino households were glued to their TV sets or radios watching or listening religiously to the trial

proceedings, which on average lasted for six to seven hours of daily programming. The television allowed ordinary citizens to be jurors in their own right as events were unfolding before their very eyes in real time and not recorded beforehand. So much so that on the fateful day of 16 January 2001, almost 86 percent of Metro Manila residents and 60 percent nationwide watched the TV coverage (SWS, 2001). As a form of media, the television perfectly captured the perceived inclinations and the exhibition of partiality among pro-Estrada senator-jurors and the resulting preemption of the Presiding Officer's right to rule on the motion. This effectively culminated in public outrage that ended in a grand popular mobilization in January 2001.

The power of short messaging service (SMS) or "text" in Filipino parlance of the mobile phone was also heavily utilized. As an organizational device, emergency meetings among civil society groups could be announced and passed around leaders instantly. SMS also provided a cheap, effective, and efficient medium to diffuse information on protest actions and other similar activities. For the unorganized part of the citizenry, there was a periodic swapping of thousands of jokes and slogans about Estrada through their mobile handsets before and during the impeachment trial got under way (Rafael, 2003; Pertierra *et al.*, 2002). Perhaps the mobilizing potential of the text service was exemplified in the spontaneous gathering that led to the Second People Power Revolt at the famous EDSA Shrine a few hours before the collapse of the impeachment trial. In the four-day grand mobilization, "texting" mainly provided the meeting schedules, locations, and even the proper attire for the protest actions.

Implications for Democratization in the Philippines

The events that unfolded and the actions of civil society and media geared towards holding Joseph Estrada accountable can be considered as a watershed for democratization in the Philippines. However, it cannot be oversimplified to declaring that it was either a boon or bane to the country's pursuit for democratic consolidation. It has a Janus-faced character as it both manifested positive and negative indications of the state of Philippine democracy.

On a positive note, the ability and efficacy of civil society and the media to demand accountability from government is indeed a breakthrough in Philippine politics. They have reconceptualized the means and locus of accountability that was formerly restricted to elections and state institutions. Particularly in this case, societal actors had to come in since not much was to be expected from the government side to be able to elicit accountability. However, this paper will argue that there are still no alternatives for effective institutions of accountability.

It must also be noted that all the activities of the societal actors of accountability would not be possible without the existence of a relatively open democratic space and the tradition of activism and participation in the Philippines. Both the constitution and other laws of the country have permitted the active role of civil society as a partner in governance. The so-called "NGO explosion" after 1986 has caused the proliferation of civil society organizations of all types and kinds increasing the density of the "non-profit" sector. Furthermore, the Philippines has relatively made great improvements in its observance and promotion of certain civil and political rights - particularly those of association and expression.

In this case, the PCIJ would not have produced its investigative reports without free access to public documents and the free atmosphere for media to operate in. *Kompil II* would not have been able to file

the impeachment case if there was no precedent for citizen claims or suits, ERM would not have organized all those mobilizations without the observance of the right to assemble and the expression of dissent toward government, and finally *eLagda.com* would not have had the mandate for a signature campaign without the e-commerce Law and the recall mechanism for elected officials. In essence, the societal actors that were identified in this paper operated within the legitimate and democratic sphere and have assumed themselves as the legitimate claimants of the rights of the Filipino citizenry. Thus, in order for societal accountability to even commence, certain structural conditions would have to exist.

The other side of the coin seems to suggest that Philippine democracy remains uninstitutionalized, hollow, and muddled. The breakdown of the constitutional process of impeachment was the culminating indicator of the "accountability deficit" of the Philippine political system. As the main mechanism to be able to hold the most powerful politician in the land accountable, it was not insulated enough from the pressures of clientelism and partisan loyalty devoid of the public interest. According to a well-known authority on Philippine politics, the turn of the events that unfolded in January 2001 speaks of the weakness of Philippine political institutions. Up to half of the senators appear to have been for sale. Furthermore, the very weak nature of Philippine political parties facilitated Estrada's fall as even the leading members of his coalition left as soon as his misgovernance was exposed (Landé, 2001).

Definitely, the accountability deficit should be a concern for the current regime as a perception of the prevalence of corruption and other particularistic acts would definitely cause undue duress on the legitimacy and stability of the country.

Indicators coming from both domestic and foreign surveys on the ability of the government to impose accountability have not been that desirable. For example, the country's scores in the Transparency International's (TI) Corruption Perceptions Index have been decreasing for the past three years (Arugay, 2004b). This case has exemplified the ability of Philippine civil society to act as a guardian of democracy and its ability to rise in indignation to abuses of political power. However, this must be treated with guarded optimism as most of the civil society leaders were appointed to key government posts in the current Macapagal-Arroyo administration. Civil society's ability to produce able, public-spirited, and honest governance will be tested. Furthermore, this paper argues that one positive implication is that the government, civil society, and the Filipino people at large have taken the issue of corruption with more significance. While it will remain a disease that will plague the country, an awareness of corruption and its repercussions seems to be emerging. This can impinge upon the

existing "culture of impunity" upon corrupt officials who have mastered the art of surviving accountability.

The challenge for Philippine democracy is how to address the accountability deficit on the country's institutions and at the same time balancing it with the emergence of societal accountability carried by a relatively powerful civil society. The case of the RIO campaign against Estrada cannot be totally categorized as a successful case of societal accountability given that its outcome must ultimately result in the strengthening of the vertical and horizontal institutions of accountability. As far as holding Estrada accountable goes, the process is ongoing as his trial for the crime of plunder has yet to be finalized. Some of the societal actors have created special bodies to be "watchdogs" in the plunder trial, indicating that civil society will continue to keep a observant eye in this struggle. In the meantime, accountability in the Philippines remains to be a work-in-progress and thus a future challenge for the present and future administrations.

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