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CIVIL SOCIETY, DEMOCRACY AND DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA

Proceedings of a Workshop for Development Practitioners

USAID

Hosted by the U.S. Agency for International Development

June 9-10, 1994
Washington, D.C.

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I. INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

A. Background and Objectives

On June 9-10, 1994, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) hosted a workshop entitled "Civil Society, Democracy and Development in Africa." The workshop, which took place at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace Conference Center, brought together 85 representatives from a wide range of donor agencies, academia, and U.S. and African non-governmental organizations. This was the third[1] in a series of workshops and conferences undertaken through USAID's Africa Democracy and Governance project. The overall purpose of the workshop was to answer the following question:

> ***What does the development practitioner in USAID or in other agencies need to know to be effective in influencing civil societies in Africa to join more fully in promoting democratic governance.***

The topic was of particular relevance to USAID given the earlier release of its newly formulated Sustainable Development Strategy (March 1994), in which the promotion of democratic development became one of four key programmatic objectives designed to achieve wider Agency goals. While USAID had traditionally supported NGOs and a variety of other non-state actors in many of its country programs over the years, providing them with assistance in a strategic manner to promote both democracy and sustainable development was essentially a new endeavor. The workshop was thus conceived of as a means to increase USAID's understanding of these traditional development partners within the context of its new strategic interests as well as the conditions that gave rise to them. The wave of democratic transitions that swept through the world during the past five years have been no where more dramatic than in Africa. The regional focus of the workshop not only helped to make the discussion of what had hitherto been largely a theoretical exercise more comprehensible to a wider range of Agency interests, it also directly served the many individual USAID Missions in Africa which had become increasingly involved in the field of democratic development in general and civil society strengthening in particular.

B. Keynote Address and Issues for Donors

In her keynote address to workshop participants, the Deputy Administrator of USAID, Dr. Carol Lancaster, raised a number of conceptual and practical considerations that would frame the remainder of the two day deliberations. While conceptual issues including definitions and the relationship between democracy and development were important, and in fact consumed a significant portion of the participants time, the DA emphasized that for the practitioner concerned with results, there were a set of equally important practical questions that required due attention. Chief among these were:

- Whether to focus on civil society organizations with a strictly political agenda, or to also work with those having a more developmental orientation who may occasionally become involved in policy issues in response to sectoral concerns of their members or clients?

- How does a donor like USAID reconcile its desire to work with associational groups to achieve some of its own goals while recognizing that these groups have their own organizational objectives as well as needs which should also be of equal concern to USAID?

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[1] The first took place in September 1992, focussing on the topic: "Limiting Administrative Corruption in the Democratizing States of Africa." The second, a conference hosted by USAID on behalf of the Special Program of Assistance (SPA) for Africa, took place in April 1993 around the theme of "Economic Reform in Africa's New Era of Political Liberalization." For copies of these conference proceedings, please contact: Mr. Robert Shoemaker, AFR/SD/DG, Bureau for Africa, USAID.

- What activities ought USAID or other donors be supporting in the area of civil society; or put differently, what activities of associational groups themselves merit USAID support? Finally, are there conditions under which USAID should not intervene at all to strengthen associational groups?

In her concluding remarks, Dr. Lancaster cautioned participants against an assistance approach focussing exclusively on strengthening civil society groups organized to articulate and advance private interests over the broader public good. Such an approach, she noted, could eclipse the equally important role of local or municipal governments as alternative avenues for promoting individual and group interests which contribute to democratic governance.

Representing the Africa Bureau of USAID, the workshop host, Mr. William Kaschak raised several issues related to the options that donors had in working with and supporting civil societies. The first point made dealt with the increasing financial limitations under which donors operate today and which serve as the principal parameter constraining the types of activities they can undertake in their sustainable development programs. In the case of USAID, it has led to placing greater emphasis on prioritizing its objectives and managing for results while looking at how its interventions can, at a minimum, initiate and energize the democratization process which must ultimately be owned and sustained by indigenous peoples and their institutions. His second point was very much at the heart of what donors have been engaged in for years -- the promotion of economic growth. Experience has shown that broad-based economic growth is more likely to take place where societal participation in national decision making has expanded and where a concomitant increase in governmental accountability and transparency has resulted from the practice of democracy. Finally, Mr. Kaschek asked what donors could do to increase civil society's capacity to both **demand** effective governance from the state and, equally important, to **supply** it from the institutions of civil society itself. In this regard, he encouraged workshop participants to consider the role of donors in promoting an enabling environment that nurtures rather than inhibits civil society's participation in political as well as economic and social life.

C. Report Structure and Content

The remainder of this report is structured into a main body and a set of annexes as follows:

1. Chapters II through V present the proceedings of each of the four principal sessions into which the two day workshop was divided. In this regard, the individual chapters are a synthesis of issues, debate and conclusions generated in each session within the framework of a specific set of objectives. Each chapter, therefore, reflects and synthesizes: (i) the issues raised in individual papers delivered by commissioned specialists; (ii) the discussions of expert panel members critiquing the papers presented; and (iii) the general debate from the participants themselves.

2. Chapter VI, provides an overall workshop summary, lessons learned and a set of recommendations made by participants to USAID. In this session, USAID officers with an interest and experience in other geographic regions joined participants to comment on workshop conclusions in terms of the historical and cultural differences that have shaped political life in these other regions.

3. The annexes appended to these proceedings include: (i) the workshop agenda (annex 1); (ii) list of participants (annex 2); (iii) the individual papers delivered at the workshop; and (iv) a special study on civil society in Botswana prepared by Dr. John Holm, and partially funded by USAID.

II. CIVIL SOCIETY: DEFINITIONS AND DESCRIPTIONS

A. General Overview

This first session was designed to provide participants with a conceptual understanding of civil society as well as practical issues related to supporting it. In addition to examining definitional issues the discussions centered on providing an illustrative "map of the universe" of civil society to convey the wide array and diverse objectives of the groups and associations that are active in African civil society. Finally, the workshop organizers wanted to ensure that the distinctiveness of the African context in general and civil society in particular, as embodied in a different historical context and cultural influences were acknowledged and taken into consideration by American practitioners whose own understandings were similarly conditioned by the uniqueness of European and American experiences.

Many of the issues and questions that were discussed in this session reflected those highlighted in the opening session, as previously noted, and were carried over into each of the subsequent sessions. Thus, in synthesizing the proceedings from this session an attempt has been made to incorporate earlier points and note those that will be addressed later in this report. In addition to the combination of papers presented, critiques made by commentators, and general debate engendered that composed this session's proceedings, participants had the opportunity to review a number of civil society definitions through a "poster walk" organized by Dr. Kenneth Kusterer of American University. Annex 5 contains a number of these definitions discussed during the workshop.

Questions Addressed: Conceptual versus operational definitions of civil society; the associational actors which compose civil society; how civil society contributes to democracy and good governance; the specific types of activities that civil society organizations undertake in promoting democratic development; whether there are differences between the anglo-saxon and the African conceptions of civil society; and which civil society actors and what types of activities should be supported by donors.

Overview Panel:
Dr. Edmond Keller, UCLA, Moderator
Dr. Dwayne Woods, Purdue University, Commentator
Mr. Mamadou Diouf, CODESRIA, Commentator
Dr. Joel Barkan, University of Iowa, Commentator

Papers & Presenters:

Dr. Ebere Onwudiwe, Central State University: "Civil Society in Africa - A Comment"

Dr. Peter P. Ekeh, SUNY, Buffalo: "Historical & Cross Cultural Contexts of Civil Society in Africa"

Dr. Aili Mari Tripp, University of Wisconsin, Madison: "The Heterogeneity of Associations in Africa"

B. Session Proceedings and Principal Issues Addressed

In trying to define the concept of civil society there was considerable disagreement among participants as to its underlying dimensions and meaning. As Peter Ekeh noted in his paper, civil society like other theoretical constructs including that of democracy, is an "essentially contested concept" which has generated debate since its introduction into political discourse over 200 years ago during the French

revolution. While participants were unable to agree on a single definition, there was general consensus on several aspects of the concept. Specifically, there was agreement that civil society could be considered the realm of social interaction that exists between the household and the state; that there are essentially a set of intermediary associations that inhabit this realm; and, that they are based on voluntary association and exhibit a significant degree of autonomy from the state.

There were a number of issues which produced significant debate. The first involved whether a useful definition of civil society should incorporate a normative dimension, and whether this normative dimension could transcend its initial grounding in liberal European thought. Dwayne Woods noted that civil society first came into usage to reflect and embrace the notion of individual rights and freedoms within a liberal democratic framework. In this regard, he noted that collective action undertaken through autonomous associations was seen as a primary means to prevent state encroachment on these individual rights and freedoms. The normative dimension had its roots in the theory of the individual with civil society ideally demonstrating a set of values associated with trust, reciprocity, tolerance, and inclusiveness ... necessary ingredients that encourage people to join together in voluntary association. Both Ekeh and Woods felt that even though civil society as a concept originated in the West, it was based on a set of real world experiences -- authoritarian rule and its repudiation -- which have been similar to those of Africa since the late 1980s and thus could be considered a universal principle. During the open discussions, a significant number of the participants agreed with the universalist argument that civil society did have a normative dimension at both the conceptual and operational levels.

While considerable time was spent on these definitional issues, there was overall agreement that a conceptual understanding and the identification of some essential, if not general attributes of civil society (e.g., autonomy from the state, voluntary association, and for most, a normative dimension), were a precondition to dealing with issues of a more practical nature. What emerged as more relevant to participants was the need to formulate a narrower working definition of civil society that provided an operational means to target and provide support to specific organizations that could contribute to democratization and good governance. As Edmond Keller, the workshop moderator, put it in his summary of the first day's proceedings: "what we require is the ability to know civil society when we see it." The remainder of the first session was devoted to identifying a more limited set of intermediary civil society actors that were capable of advancing democracy objectives and were susceptible to donor support.

Joel Barkan, in opening remarks to the workshop, suggested that a subset of civil society organizations, or what he termed "civic society"[2] should be the focus of donor support. Civic society in this context was defined as the organizational subset of civil society that directly engaged the state for the purpose of limiting its authority and potential abuse of power while increasing the participation of non-state actors in national governance matters. This overall function of civil society, it should be noted, was termed "civic action" by a number of the commentators and paper presenters. Dr. Barkan also noted that a principal reason for narrowing the focus to this more limited subset was because many civil society actors were neither democratically run nor embodied a set of "civic" norms that were consistent with democratic principles. In a similar vein, Peter Ekeh proposed that an operational definition would target "only those free associations whose operations had 'consequences,' whether intended or unintended, of promoting

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[2] Dr. Barkan's comments were first raised in a paper written with Marina Ottaway entitled "Democratization and Civil Society" prepared for and delivered at the Democracy Roundtable Series hosted by the Overseas Development Council on May 24, 1994. This paper was included in participant's workshop packets and can be obtained from the authors.

individual liberty, and whose existence were related -- in an oppositional or countervailing manner -- to the functioning of the state." Aili Marie Tripp, expressing a different point of view, felt that a narrower definition of civil society should focus on the "extent to which organizations were capable of providing autonomous arenas for participation and how representative they were of member interests." It was thus her opinion that non-state actors did not actually have to engage the state directly and undertake civic action in order to be considered legitimate elements of civil society worthy of donor support. As discussed below, Dr. Tripp felt strongly that a variety of non-state actors which in many instances operated outside the purview of the state were undertaking important functions related to the strengthening of civil society and contributing to democratic governance. Significant and sometimes heated debate around these two points of view was generated and led to a discussion of a number of related issues.

Interestingly, many of the African participants raised the concern that exclusive focus on civic society would bias donor assistance to the more visible, urban based, and elite-led organizations that were able to gain donor attention through their proximity to and ability to communicate with them. While the issue of donor capacity to identify and work with civil society organizations is discussed in greater detail in the following chapter, the principle point raised in this session was whether donors should support what was termed during the workshop "specialized civic organizations" or "multipurpose organizations" such as traditional developmental NGOs and the local grassroots organizations with whom they often work. In fact numerous speakers expressed the concern that if civil society was interpreted operationally to include only a subset of specialized civic institutions it would likely have little relevance to the great majority of ordinary people and, by extension, democracy itself would be seen as the preserve of this same elite group.

A second issue debated was whether local level civil society actors were likely to promote "civic" values." Dr. Ebere Onwudiwe argued that they were more likely to do so than their national level counterparts, and that ethnicity and religion, rather than the cause of divisiveness so often witnessed in national level politics, were the basis for consensus and traditional values of inclusion and tolerance in subnational arenas. The characterization of local organizations as being more democratically run than those at the national level was echoed by Dr. Tripp, but principally in relation to women's groups, which from her research were found to be far more inclusive and concerned with ensuring member participation in decision making than male-dominated or mixed groups. Although many participants agreed with the notion that subnational groups in civil society, and particularly women's groups, were more likely to promote civic norms and run their affairs democratically, there was a general recognition that because of their small size and general isolation, they had limited capacity for making an impact beyond the local level at this time.

John Holm in his study of Botswana civil society and in comments made during the workshop itself, noted that many non-state actors such as labor unions and even many developmental NGOs have only in the last few years been able to gain any degree of autonomy from the state and thus act as credible advocates for public policies that benefit their members or clients. Aili Tripp notes this same trend with a range of civil society actors including women's and youth organizations, credit unions and cooperatives that find themselves in the process of disentangling themselves from one party systems or other "corporatist" state structures that have controlled associational life during previous eras of authoritarian rule. In fact, Dr. Tripp sees autonomy from the state as one of the most important characteristics defining the types of civil society organizations that merit donor attention. In general, participants felt that the tendency to view civil society in Africa as a static phenomenon was misleading and that donors interested in supporting or strengthening its growth should rather take a developmental view of a rapidly evolving array of formal and informal associational life at different points along a continuum of capacity.

C. Summary and Conclusions

Throughout most of this first session the two principal issues addressed were whether civil society had a normative dimension and which types of non-state actors should be the focus of donor support. In one important way the two issues were seen to be directly linked. A close review of the papers presented and discussions held among workshop participants made it clear that most participants agreed that to qualify for donor support an association had to be committed to civic norms and to democratic practices. Operationally, autonomy from the state or membership on the basis of voluntary association was seen as insufficient grounds for external support in the absence of tolerance of the rights of other associations and their members.

Many of the initial views of workshop participants regarding which non-state actors to support tended to be portrayed in either - or terms: either support for "growing democracy at the local level" through intermediary NGOs that work with grassroots voluntary organizations that ordinary people create to deal with problems that most affect them; or support for the creation and maintenance of an enabling environment conducive to growth of civil society at all levels through civic organizations with the capacity to monitor and ensure state compliance with fundamental constitutional guarantees of individual and group rights. Dr. Keller summarized the dichotomy as "Big C" versus "little c," or the smaller set of specialized civic organizations operating primarily at the national level versus the far greater number of subnational, multipurpose organizations that operate from the regional to local levels, who, if they undertake civic action at all, do so as one of many services provided on behalf of clients or members. Dr. Ekeh also viewed the issue as one between support for "civic public associations" (Big C or civic society) that were able to gain entry into the "public realm" which the state has traditionally dominated; and "primordial public associations" (little c or multipurpose organizations) that for the most part have concerned themselves with addressing the welfare of their members and clients with little interest in directly engaging the state in the public realm.

Dr. Keller pointed to the common ground between the two divergent views expressed above. That common ground, he said, existed precisely in the widely shared view that civil society actors worthy of support must encourage participation and popular empowerment in dealing with the political, social and economic life at all levels of the system. The role of civil society and the diverse array of institutions and organizations which comprise it, should thus be seen to promote collective decision making and action from the smallest civic unit to society itself. While such actions may not appear to directly contribute to democratic development, they do build the habit of voluntary association and inculcate civic values, both of which are necessary features of good citizenship. Two different donor strategies for targeting and strengthening civil society actors were only briefly touched upon during the session. The first was actually the recognition by donors that they have a solid base from which to work at building "little c" through their traditional sectoral programs in health, environment and economic growth. A reformulated approach in this regard would aim to have such programs be more strategic in nature by working to increase the capacity of grassroots associations to have a greater impact on policy making beyond the local level. The second strategy was related to the notion of "sequencing" assistance to civil society in terms of where a country found itself along the continuum of political development, i.e., from pre-transition to democratic consolidation. As noted, these strategies were only briefly touched upon and were addressed in greater detail in the following sessions.

III. NGOS AS INSTRUMENTS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT & DEMOCRACY

A. General Overview

This session was designed to provide insights into the capability of civil society actors to undertake civic action functions. Three different African NGOs were selected to present case studies of their programs as a means to identify strengths and weaknesses of civic organizations in this regard. One of the three, the Federation of Senegalese NGOs (FONGS), was unable to attend due to last minute logistical problems. The other two, the Kenyan YWCA and the Ghanaian International Federation of Women Lawyers (FIDA) delivered their papers which, together with presentations from the two principal commentators, provided the major activities of the afternoon's deliberations.

Questions Addressed: The role of civil society actors in promoting sustainable development and democracy; the capacity of these actors to undertake this role; relationships between: (i) international and indigenous NGOs, (ii) civil society organizations and state institutions, (iii) civil society and the private sector, and (iv) civil society and donors; and the capacity of donors to work directly with a variety of civil society actors.

Overview Panel: Ms. Joan Atherton, USAID/Africa Bureau, Moderator
Dr. Shelby Lewis, Clark Atlanta University, Commentator
Dr. Simon Fass, University of Texas, Dallas, Commentator

Papers & Presenters:

Ms. Marren Awour Akatsa-Bukachi, YWCA, Nairobi, Kenya: "Democracy and Development in Africa"

Ms. Emelia Adjepong, FIDA, Accra, Ghana: "Women, Law & Democracy"

B. Session Proceedings and Principal Issues Addressed

Dr. Shelby Lewis started the session by raising an issue which has generated considerable controversy over the past several years within both academic and policy making circles in the West as well as in developing countries themselves. The issue was whether a market economy and strong economic growth were prerequisites for democratic development or, conversely, whether a democratic political system was a precondition for a successful market economy and economic growth. Discussions from workshop participants focussed on the Asian Tigers and Chile as examples of the former line of thinking, while Eastern Europe and several other South American countries were used as illustrations of the latter case. Dr. Lewis' point was, however, that in much of Africa over the past five years economic liberalization and democratic reforms have gone hand-in-hand rather than one driving the other. In terms of civil society development, the unfolding of these simultaneous processes has, therefore, given rise to a whole new range of civil society actors grouped around business and professional interests on the one hand and human rights, civic education and policy advocacy on the other.

A number of participants noted that Dr. Lewis' scenario, while generally accurate, needed to also highlight the importance of donors as external catalysts promoting both economic and political reform processes. As Simon Fass pointed out, the imposition of difficult economic reforms on African governments, many of whom were already in dire financial straits to begin with, had the effect of

elevating the importance of NGOs in particular as alternative service providers in areas that had hitherto been the sole domain of the public sector. An observation touched upon by Dr. Lewis, and in the attached paper on Botswana civil society,[3] concerned the fact that developmental NGOs have often been singled out and even equated with civil society in the early stages of political transitions. This was due in large part, to the fact that they were one of the few, if only, organized non-state entities permitted to participate in national life up to that point. Several of the NGO participants noted that because of the developmental and humanitarian work that NGOs, and particularly church organizations, had historically undertaken in many African countries, they were best placed, in many instances, to take a lead role in promoting democratic change as the state was forced to withdraw as the dominant actor in economic, social and political lives of their countries. What distinguished NGOs from other actors in the early days of the pro-democracy movements was not only their organizational capacity, but as Aili Tripp pointed out previously, their autonomy from the state; something that could not be said for labor and student unions or women's and youth federations which had traditionally been affiliated to one party state institutions.

The impact of the state's withdrawal from public service delivery was, as Dr. Fass pointed out, to diffuse authority for governance decision making to (i) the decentralized levels of state administration -- specifically to local or municipal governments; and (ii) the voluntary self-governing associations created by rural people who were no longer constrained by government from taking initiative for their welfare into their own hands. The effect was thus to greatly expand the circle of people participating in decision making concerning matters that immediately involved them. As Dr. Fass concluded, ordinary people have also achieved a new degree of empowerment through their capacity to make an impact on political decision making beyond the local level through several intermediary mechanisms including developmental NGOs, civic organizations and federations of grassroots self-governing associations. Presentations by both the FIDA and YWCA provided examples of NGOs and civic organizations that undertook these intermediary roles and which were primarily involved in empowering women through legal rights education and leadership training for political party candidates. Although the FONGS representative was not present, Mamadou Diouf of CODESRIA was able to relate to workshop participants the work that FONGS had undertaken in its capacity as the "apex" organization of a federation of community-based NGOs working throughout Senegal.

In their presentations, both FIDA/Ghana and the YWCA/Kenya raised several important issues with relevance to the wider range of NGOs about the nature of relationships they had developed with donors, government agencies, international NGOs, as well as other local NGOs. International NGOs were major supporters of both FIDA and the YWCA and provided critical financial assistance, training and technical assistance. While other NGO participants noted the importance of international NGO support to indigenous NGO communities, there was also significant discussion concerning some of the negative aspects of their contributions. As Shelby Lewis pointed out, the principal tension between the two parties related to the way in which donors tended to fund their own NGOs because of their superior organizational capacity to manage funds, thus crowding out support for indigenous NGOs. While this was a noticeable pattern in traditional development sectors, it was not clear that it would carry over into support for organizations undertaking civic action. Most participants did recognize that international NGOs were still the principal source of funding and general support for their local counterparts.

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[3] As noted above, USAID partially funded the attached study undertaken by John Holm, Patrick Molutsi and Gloria Somolekae, entitled "Civil Society in Botswana: A Developmental View." Many of the findings and conclusions of this study have particular relevance to questions posed in this and the following chapter and are incorporated accordingly.

In the Botswana study two issues were raised in respect to government's relations to local NGOs. The first centered on the legal, fiscal and regulatory environment under which civil society organizations operated. Mamadou Diouf noted that most African countries had associational laws which governed the registration of NGOs and other non-state actors such as labor unions. He also noted that virtually all of these laws were originally carried over from the colonial era, but have largely been amended since the late 1980s greatly facilitating the growth of voluntary associational life and conferring significant benefits to those receiving government recognition. A number of participants did note, however, that through registration requirements these new laws resulted in creating a critical distinction and hence tension between national level NGOs and local grassroots organizations and the federations which represent them. As summed up in the Botswana study, because most of these laws required organizations to demonstrate a significant capacity for the management of funding and the preparation of written reports, they biased official recognition to mainly urban based and, in most cases, non-membership or mass-based organizations.

The second issue raised concerning "government - civil society relations" was in the former's use of public funds, including donor assistance, to finance only those NGOs which were seen capable of delivering services in sectors of importance to government. As discussions among participants made clear, this had a three-fold impact on non-state actors in terms of: (i) government's ability to control which NGOs received public funds for service delivery inhibited all NGOs from engaging government directly over related policy matters which affected their members or clients, thus effectively decreasing their autonomy vis-a-vis the state as both Dr. Tripp's paper and the Botswana study pointed out; (ii) biasing the use of public funds towards a relatively small number of larger urban-based NGOs which government felt comfortable working with; and (iii) that little if any public funding was available to assist NGOs in improving their overall institutional capacity and hence long-term sustainability.

Dr. Lewis raised a final issue which generated considerable discussion among participants. This concerned donor funding of NGOs and other civil society actors in both their traditional roles as development agents and in their newer capacity as civic organizations undertaking a range of new civic action functions. The recent changes brought about by both political and economic liberalization in most African countries have increased the profile and role of NGOs, especially in terms of how donors have come to view them in advancing their reform agendas in these two areas. Both NGO presenters as well as the two commentators and workshop participants noted that while donors in general, and USAID in particular, have increasingly targeted support to these non-state actors, it has been neither long-term nor in sufficient quantities to make any lasting impact on their capacity to undertake the types of functions that either they or donors envisaged. Coupled with the low level of institutional capacity of the great majority of civil society actors, the pattern has again tended to favor those few civic organizations which have already demonstrated a track-record with donors.

Both FIDA and the YWCA portrayed their greatest constraints in terms of an overall lack of resources including: the lack of a full-time secretariat relying instead on the volunteer labor of their members; the inability to undertake activities outside the capital city due to insufficient funding and transportation; no permanent office space or equipment; and the fact that what funding they did get from donors, was primarily for discrete project activities which ultimately had not contributed to building the necessary institutional infrastructure required to support these activities. The YWCA and several other workshop participants brought up the difficulty of trying to meet USAID registration requirements, the cumbersome and lengthy process of gaining approval for their projects, the difficulty in trying to raise matching funds which often amounted to one-third of total project resources, and the lack of flexibility in reallocating funding based on changed circumstances as a project evolved and new needs or problems emerged.

C. Summary and Conclusions

This session pointed out a number of tensions that have resulted from civil society's expanded role in national development efforts. NGOs and other civic organizations have been thrown into a whole new series of relationships with both internal and external institutions each with their own agendas related to the significant economic and political reforms which African countries have experienced in recent years. In many of these cases, the objectives of these other institutions have conflicted with those of civil society actors, or if consistent in principle, have been unrealistic in operational terms. Both donors and international NGOs, while sympathetic and supportive of civil society's new role, have ended up either competing with them for scarce funding (international NGOs) or have tended to use NGOs to further their own objectives rather than focus on the longer-term institutional needs of NGOs (donors). While the enabling environment within which civil society operates has steadily improved over the past five years, there are significant reforms yet to be enacted to permit a wider range of non-state actors to participate in decision making that ultimately affects them.

All three of these institutional actors, i.e., governments, donors and international NGOs, have played a major role in shaping the nature of civil society in virtually all African countries. This point is especially highlighted in the Botswana study of civil society. It has had specific effects on the ability of most indigenous civil society actors to move beyond small-scale, low-impact activities and equally important, has been a major cause for creating divisions within this sector between the few who obtain outside funding and the many who do not. A major issue in this regard discussed by workshop participants was how likely it was to think that financial sustainability would be a realistic objective for the great majority of NGOs and civic organizations. Not only were these organizations undertaking a wide range of activities -- either replacing government in the provision of public services or undertaking purely civic functions geared towards limiting state authority -- that were unlikely to generate revenues for self-financing, the receipt of donor funding and government subventions also had the potential to undermine their institutional autonomy. Although participants noted a general decline in external donor support to Africa, it was also pointed out that remaining funding was going to a smaller number of countries overall and through larger grants to a more limited set of non-state actors.

As Dr. Lewis concluded, consolidating democracy and ensuring freedom is a high maintenance endeavor. It requires a long-term commitment by donors to nurturing civil society organizations through a series of institutional hurdles to growth and development. One of the principal conclusions raised in the Botswana study and echoed by many workshop participants, however, was that while there were numerous concerns about civil society's capacity to contribute to democratic and sustainable development, that viewed from a developmental rather than static perspective, tremendous progress had been made and should not lead to pessimism about future directions of civil society in Africa.

IV. THE POLITICAL CONTEXT FOR AFRICAN CIVIL SOCIETY

A. General Overview

Mr. Nate Fields, Deputy Assistant Administrator of the Africa Bureau, opened the day's deliberations with a brief presentation, a number of points of which will be incorporated into the following review of session proceedings. Both sessions three and four were necessarily short given the fact that the objectives set out for them had to be accomplished within the morning session of the second day. Session three thus consisted of a paper delivered by Dr. Guy Martin and the presentations of the two commentators, Dr. John Holm and Dr. Robert Charlick. The overall purpose of this session was to examine the larger

political context within which civil society has evolved and operated, and particularly at a given stage along the continuum of political development, i.e., from pre-transition through democratic transition to consolidation. Many of the issues covered in this session were initially raised in the two previous session.

Questions Addressed: Relationship between democratization and governance and civil societies role in promoting both; divergent perceptions of democracy; the stages of political development and civil society's role and functions by stage; and the relationship between multiparty systems, democracy and civil society.

Opening Remarks: Mr. Nate Fields, Deputy Assistant Administrator, Africa Bureau/USAID

Overview Panel: Dr. John Holm, Ohio School of International Business, Commentator
Dr. Robert Charlick, Cleveland State University & ARD, Commentator

Papers & Presenters:

Dr. Guy Martin, Clark Atlanta University, "Democratization & Governance in Africa"

B. Session Proceedings and Principal Issues Addressed

Dr. Martin raised a new set of issues in his paper and presentation based on a discussion of the relationship between democratization and governance, and the linkage of civil society to both processes. His presentation was in large measure a return to a principal topic of session one, namely, the relationship between democratization and sustainable development. Rather than frame the issue solely in terms of whether democracy was a prerequisite of development or the reverse, Dr. Martin noted recent study and research which viewed democracy in terms of the political system most likely to lead to good governance and hence economic development. He noted that while it was too soon to state that democracy was a necessary precondition for economic development -- there being little empirical evidence on which to base such an assumption -- the preceding 30 years of authoritarian rule certainly provides adequate evidence that this political system has had a devastating impact on economic development in the African context and by implication good governance.

The recent attention placed on good or effective governance also provided for the first time a conceptual basis for civil society's participation in decision making related to national level political and economic matters. As Dr. Martin noted, such a conception found credence not only within the academic community, but was adopted in a limited form by the World Bank and other donors who saw societal participation in governance decision making as having a positive causal relationship in the ability of African countries to initiate and sustain economic reform. In this regard, a democratic political system or, at a minimum, political liberalization which permits for the expression of societal interests in the public realm of decision making, was considered superior to the alternatives. Several workshop participants commented that donor support for democratization has often been expressed in a set of "conditionalities," economic as well as political, which have been impossible for even newly democratized governments to obtain due to the dire financial straits and consequent constraints they imposed on their capacity for meeting either internal or external demands for reform.

The second major issue addressed in this session was the "typology of democratic transition in Africa" as termed by Dr. Martin to explain the fact of the different forms and various speeds and outcomes that the democratization process was having in Africa. Participants discussed the political stages of

development proposed in Dr. Martin's typology and generally agreed that political liberalization marked the on-set of the transition stage while the successful holding of multiparty elections marked a successful end of the transition and the beginning of true democratization and its consolidation. Dr. Martin noted that the beginning of a transition did not, however, automatically lead to either democracy or a stable political system. Several participants made specific reference to the fact that while multiparty systems and competitive elections were necessary ingredients in any democratic system they were not sufficient conditions ensuring democracy itself; and that donors should not confuse the two when pressing for political reforms. The flawed and contested elections in countries such as the Cameroons and Kenya were noted as cases where multiparty elections were used by authoritarian regimes as a means to try and legitimate their authority. Other participants pointed out that elections simply served as an arena in which political elites competed for access to public resources while leaving unchanged the marginalized status of the majority of the country's citizens.

John Holm commented on relations between political parties and civil society actors based on his study of civil society in Botswana. As previously discussed by Dr. Martin, Dr. Holm also noted that political parties tended to organize themselves around ethnic or ethno-regional groupings. The tendency of political parties to build a "mass-base" by organizing corporatist structures such as women's, youth and peasant wings, has undermined and limited the capacity of many other civil society associations to use parties as effective channels for further representing their interests in the broader political arena. Instead they have had to maintain the personalistic strategy of directly seeking specific patrons in the top levels of the state bureaucracy. As Robert Charlick pointed out, this pattern of patrimonial and personalistic participation differs little from that observed in previously more closed authoritarian regimes.

Both commentators cautioned participants concerning the preference of political parties and state institutions to bypass civil society organizations in favor of creating their own pseudo-corporatist entities or dealing with the lowest level of the formal administrative system, i.e., the village, as a means to structure popular participation in democratic national politics. In either case, the ability to coopt the leaders of these structures was much easier than it did the leaders of truly autonomous civic organizations that emerged in the earlier days of democratic transitions.

Both Dr. Charlick and Guy Martin commented on the importance of the Sovereign National Conference in countries such as Benin, Mali and Niger as a transition model in which social forces in civil society actually took power from military or one party political regimes without recourse to significant violence. The lessons have been negative as well as positive. One of the principal tasks of these National Conferences, in addition to managing transition elections, has been the drafting of new constitutions, or rewriting the "social contract" between state and society. There is little doubt that the participants in this negotiation of the new "rules of the game" have been greatly expanded as a result of the National Conference framework.

The problem as Dr. Charlick noted has been in the willingness and capacity of recently elected democratic regimes to actually follow through on the agreements reached at the National Conferences and embodied in the newly written constitutions. As examples he pointed out the corrupt judiciaries that did not enforce newly mandated laws; the failure to set up promised commissions to oversee such areas as media independence and human rights; or the lack of responsiveness to constituents by newly elected parliamentarians. In a number of cases, governments have even tried to restrict associational formation through the passage of laws placing onerous requirements on NGOs to gain legal recognition.

C. Summary and Conclusions

One of the principal points emerging from this session concerning the way in which the political context has conditioned civil society's formation and functioning was the wide variety of its impacts in different political settings and at different political stages. As stressed by participants throughout the workshop, it highlighted the importance of the cultural and historical characteristics in determining economic, social as well as political life in individual countries. While there was no resolution to the ongoing debate over whether democracy was a determinant or result of economic development, this session did raise the importance of governance as a link between democratization and sustainable development. Democracy emerges as an operational means to achieve good governance and sustainable development, as well as a normative end in itself. Returning to the workshop's first session, democratic governance was the term referred to which best embodied this conceptual relationship between democratization and governance. The relevance to civil society is a fundamental one in that governance decision making no longer remains the sole prerogative of the state, but rather is a privilege ceded to the state by society which itself retains significant rights pertaining to a range of national and local matters. It is in this way that democratically elected governments gain their legitimacy, i.e., by society's bestowal of it through its participation in defining the limits of state authority, rather than in democratic "trappings" such as elections and multiparty systems which can be easily subverted during the transition and in the early stages of democratic consolidations.

While Dr. Martin provided a brief portrayal of the stages of political development through the typology presented in his paper, it was only able to generate the most general discussions on this potentially important subject, and from some of the questions asked by participants, appears to be an area meriting further study and research.

V. CONSTRAINTS AND LIMITS OF CIVIL SOCIETY TO INFLUENCE GOVERNMENT

A. General Overview

This session continued issues raised in session three which focussed on the larger political context, its impact on civil society formation and the participation of civic organizations in national decision making matters. From a development practitioners perspective, the session was set up to understand the importance of how groups in African civil society interact with each other and with the state -- particularly how the motives and agendas of the state and non-governmental associations are negotiated. The principal question addressed in this regard was: "to what degree can or should donor agencies be involved in what is, in effect, conflict resolution." Dr. Dwayne Wood's commissioned paper served as the focal point of the session in which Donald Rothchild and May King served as commentators.

Questions Addressed: Characteristics of African associational life; strategies of state control; political parties, elections and civil society; the nature of associational politics and its transnational dimension; the importance of strong states for civil society development; the state's role in promoting civil society during both transition and consolidation stages; and donor strategies in promoting strong civil societies.

Overview Panel: Dr. Donald Rothchild, University of California, Davis, Commentator
Dr. Mae King, Howard University

Papers & Presenters:

Dr. Dwayne Woods, Purdue University, "The Vertical and Horizontal Dimensions of Associational Politics in Sub-Saharan Africa"

Dr. Donald Rothchild, University of California, "Activating Civil Society in Africa"

B. Session Proceedings and Issues Addressed

Dwayne Woods raised two issues related to fundamental characteristics of associational life in Africa which donors needed to be aware of when targeting assistance to specific civic organizations. The first was to make a basic distinction between **formal** and **informal** associations, and the relationship between the two. As discussed in previous sessions, Dr. Woods noted that legally recognized, urban-based (formal) associations were far more likely to receive support from both donors and government than were their far more numerous, small scale and fragmented (informal) counterparts operating outside of governmental regulation. This access to resources, particularly following a democratic transition, was considered to be one of the principal variables determining the capacity of civil society actors to gain entrance to and participation in the public realm of policy making. In this regard, associational autonomy, the greatest challenge of the post-transition period, was largely seen as a function of the ability of both individual civic organizations and the sector as a whole to attract external resources.

The second characteristic centered on the ability of emerging civil societies to shake-off the vertical and asymmetrical nature of associational structuring imposed by African states for a new relationship embodied by horizontal networks of more equal relationships between and among non-state organizations at various levels of societal interaction. A number of workshop participants noted that African governments have traditionally used a form of "state" corporatism which essentially expanded the patron - client network from a local means of structuring associational life to a national level strategy of societal control. It thus permitted the leaders of certain state sanctioned-entities such as labor unions and student organizations a limited form of participation in national level policy-making in return for supporting the authoritarian status quo. Horizontal linkages were viewed as taking place at the initiation of civic organizations themselves, promoting solidarity among groups with similar interests, and a counterweight to state supported corporatist bodies.

One of the principal means for both urban-based and peasant-run associations to obtain a degree of autonomy from the state, in most instances without recourse or access to external resources, was through increasing horizontal linkages between similar type organizations operating at the same level. In the urban context this included neighborhood and ethnic associations; and in rural areas, mutual-aid societies and cooperatives. In both cases, economic interest was a principal ingredient in bringing individuals and groups together in horizontal association.

Dr. Woods showed that the more associations were able to coordinate across policy issues and transcend socio-economic cleavages the greater the probability that they could impact the policy making process and thus demonstrate the "distributional effects of associational politics." While several participants disagreed with him, Dr. Woods defended his basic premise which was that the strength of civil society actors could be measured in terms of their capability for engaging the state in public arena where governance decisions were made. As Dr. Charlick noted in the preceding discussion, one of the principal governance functions in any society relates to decisions concerning the allocation of public resources to various societal interests. Thus associational politics refers to ability of the various civil society groupings to gain access

to and compete for these resources, which in the African context are fairly limited to begin with. Under authoritarian regimes, it was the few monopolistic corporatist entities largely controlled by the state that received societies share of public resources. The promise of democracy has been to increase the number of non-state actors participating in decisions concerning the way in which public resources are to be shared. "Proportionality," as Dr. Woods terms the equity dimension of resource allocation among competing societal interests is a sign of the democratic transition and civil societies strength in being able to ensure it.

Dr. King and Don Rothchild both noted that during the democratic transition and in the early stages of consolidation it has been the "formal" civil society actors which have dominated the non-state's space in the newly opened public realm. The informal members of civil society, urban as well as rural, continue to be relatively marginalized under democratization as they were during the previous era of authoritarian rule. The lesson for international donors such as USAID according to Dr. Woods has been the influence of their assistance in "skewing the associational landscape" by the way in which their investment decisions have supported certain civil society actors over others. As most participants pointed out during the discussion period, it has been formal civic organizations that donors have invested in most, thus, ignoring the possibility of strengthening horizontal linkages at lower levels of civil society formation. The impact of this support has been to skew associational life in many African countries in favor of the few, larger formal associations many of which have attempted to re-institute a new quasi-corporatist, top-down organizational structure on their members or clients.

A number of participants referred back to the previous session in which the electoral process and political parties were briefly discussed in relation to civil society. Dr. Woods noted that democratization brought with it multiparty politics and free elections, which was supposed to provide a leveling effect on the power of the formal civil society actors vis-a-vis their weaker informal counterparts. Through the power of the vote, political parties were supposed to compete for all societal interests, including the much more numerous rural peasantry, thus increasing their ability to place demands on the political system for a share of public resources. As Dr. Rothchild pointed out, because of their fragmentation and general inability to forge horizontal linkages with similar organizations, farm families were unable to articulate and aggregate their interests in a way that political parties felt obligated to respond to in a serious way. Thus, the political party system and elections in general have failed to offer previously politically marginalized people with an alternative means of influencing government decision making.

While Dr. Woods sees the need to strengthen civil society in order to extend and sustain an enabling environment that promotes trust and reciprocity (its facilitating dimension) as well as a countervailing function versus the state (its impeding dimension), both of which contribute to encouraging democracy, Donald Rothchild in his comments felt that insufficient attention has been paid to the importance of government in "activating and empowering civil society." Not only does the state benefit from a hardy and vibrant civil society, but civil society itself would be unable to develop without a reasonably strong state. He notes that cooperation is just as much an inherent component of the state - civil society relationship as is conflict. This cooperative dimension centers primarily on joint problem-solving endeavors that would be expected to take place in a democratic setting and in which the state welcomed rather than inhibited societal participation in governance decision making.

Many participants questioned Dr. Wood's assumption that the state was either willing or capable of creating an enabling environment, including adherence to the rule of law, necessary for civil society growth and development. Dr. Woods himself noted that this was, in fact, the principal "paradox" of the democratic transition, i.e., the state's encouragement of civil society participation in decision making may

ultimately lead to the opposition of state policies by the very groups that it has supported. His point, however, is that donors should not make a regular practice of by-passing state institutions in their desire to strengthen African civil societies. This is particularly true today when, as Dr. Woods noted, international donors are increasingly disengaging from the support of African development which "by default leaves the African state as the primary actor capable of motivating and empowering indigenous civil societies." This proposition led to considerable debate among participants with no final resolution except to note that the degree to which it was found to be true varied according to the commitment of newly democratizing regimes to basic principals of non-state participation and autonomy.

C. Summary and Conclusions

This session essentially concluded that a principal constraint to African civil societies' capacity to influence government policy making has been the lingering effects of corporatism. The underlying organizing principle of a corporatist system is the power asymmetry of patron - client relationships that link people vertically to the state by coopting leadership of mass organizations. The "art or habit of association" beyond the local level is a skill that, according to Donald Rothchild, needs to be learned by those hoping to influence the state through autonomous civic organizations. The basic requirement for modern day associational life is the building of horizontal ties based on civic norms of trust, reciprocity, and inclusion. The resulting sense of solidarity and empowerment among the previously disenfranchised provides a realistic means to replace top-down clientelism and corporatist politics which still permeate much of civil society and its relation with state institutions. Promoting horizontal linkages among new organizations, particularly at the grassroots level, permits the growth of "bottoms-up" associational life, including federating, that has a far greater likelihood of providing "informal" civil society actors with a means to influence government decision making and off-set the greater influence of "formal" civic organizations. This dichotomy has been a recurrent theme throughout the workshop.

The role of the African state in strengthening civil society was a major topic in this session and generated serious concern among participants. While there was general agreement on the need for strong African states capable of maintaining stability and ensuring an enabling environment for the growth of strong civil societies, there was considerable doubt whether this could be attained by leaving it solely in the hands of African states themselves. Participants felt that donors needed to continue their commitment to strengthening civic actors directly as a means to increase their capacity to effectively engage the state, as well as conditioning their assistance to African governments based on their performance in relation to opening the public policy arena to greater non-state participation. Participants, especially African NGOs and U.S. PVOs, did react to the growing perception as raised by Dr. Rothchild, that donors were beginning to reduce their development assistance to Africa just at the moment that true opportunities were beginning to present themselves.

VI. SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS: IMPLICATIONS FOR DONORS

A. General Overview

The final session was devoted to extracting lessons learned from the previous four sessions and for participants to have the opportunity to provide USAID with a set of suggestions as to what actions and future directions should follow the workshop. During this final session participants from other regional bureaus within USAID were asked to comment on these lessons learned and whether they were applicable or not to civil societies in their regions. The format used to achieve session objectives was small group breakout discussions guided by a series of questions (see below) developed by the organizers to address

issues and concerns that arose prior to and during the workshop. Each of the groups then reported back to the plenary which in turn generated general discussions. Concluding remarks summarizing the workshop's achievements were made by Mr. Robert Shoemaker (AFR/SD/DG, USAID).

Questions Addressed:

- Does an understanding of civil society in an African context dictate any different emphasis for a donor agency involved in democracy/governance programs? Who are the major players in civic action in Africa?

- Should certain kinds of civil society actors, notably those engaged in civic action, be given greater emphasis in USAID's efforts to strengthen civil society?

- How can a donor agency best promote the "mutual engagement" of the state and civil society?

- How should USAID's commitment to sustainable development and to participatory development influence its choice of assistance to civil society? What should it imply for support to civic action at the grassroots level?

- How should USAID's commitment to managing for results affect its choice of civil society support activities?

- What specific mechanisms have worked the best to provide desired results in USAID's efforts to support civil society?

B. Participant Suggestions: Implications for Donors

In addition to the broad range of issues raised during the conference, a number of specific suggestions based on the conclusions of the working groups were made by participants as to how USAID and other donor agencies should carry out their actions in support of civil society and sustainable democracy in Africa. The following provides participant suggestions by each of the six questions noted above.

- At a conceptual level civil society was seen to be a powerful analytic construct capable of providing donors with an understanding of the role that voluntary associations could play in the construction and maintenance of democratic systems. At the operational level, it provides donors with a programmatic tool, assisting them to (i) identify constraints and opportunities amenable to targeted assistance; and (ii) select those civic organizations capable of contributing to the transition and consolidation of democratic governance.

- At the same time, it was widely recognized that insufficient empirical data existed to determine specific contributions let alone the effectiveness of "civic" versus "civil" society in promoting democratic governance or sustainable development. A related observation with considerable agreement centered on the need for thorough analysis to be carried out at the country-level to identify, and to the extent possible, prioritize civil society status and needs. Specific suggestions made to participants in both matters included:

  - for USAID to undertake directly or sponsor research related to the impact of different civil society actors and to ensure that results were shared with other interested parties;

- country assessments should be undertaken using an integrated (four pillars) problem solving approach;

- a particular focus of assessments should be to broadly review the enabling environment within which civil society functions in its efforts to supply and demand good governance;

- assessments should be country specific taking into consideration the uniqueness of historical and cultural characteristics and their impact on the capacity of civil society to carry out supply and demand functions in that concerned environment at that point in time.

- A number of participants and USAID officials talked about how to use these analyses. They argued that the results of the analyses should tell USAID and other development agencies what key problems exist at the level of the enabling environment, priority areas of civil society support, and the time frame for addressing them. A specific analysis would allow donors and host country participants to map out short, medium and long-term strategies for supporting development of civil societies. Results of needs identified during the assessment process could then be shared among the donors. To the extent possible, development agencies should agree on respective roles based on comparative advantage, policy frameworks and program strategies. From experience already gained in the support of African civil society, participants recommended that USAID consider a number of strategies including:

  - Look at countries such as South Africa in which USAID has supported large NGO programs, or countries where PVO umbrella intermediaries have been used to channel assistance to smaller, indigenous NGOs, for lessons learned and their applicability to a wider range of African countries.

  - There has been a tendency by most donors to select just a very small number of NGOs for support -- that become "their NGOs" -- and then to overburden them with activities which do not fall within either their technical field of expertise or geographic area of operations. The recommendation is to make far more smaller-scale grants to a far wider range of organizations and see which organizations succeed and which do not.

  - There was also considerable support for funding multi-purpose NGOs as a strategy to promote "small c" civil society, which is also consistent with an area where most donors have accumulated significant experience.

  - There was total consensus by participants that an area where USAID, and other donors, could make the greatest impact was by encouraging partner governments to improve the enabling environment for civil society development. In this regard, donors should consider conditioning their foreign assistance based on the policies and behavior of governments towards their civil societies; where they do not meet minimum standards, all assistance should be cut-off.

  - Programs must be conceived of in longer timeframes than is the normal practice of USAID. While most democracy and governance activities should be framed in generational terms, USAID can help to initiate processes including capacity building that indigenous institutions can see through to completion.

- Of particular importance, there was a general consensus that USAID should not *a priori* exclude major elements of civil society, i.e., those organizations which do not have an explicit function of civic action as their primary mandate, from consideration for future support. Rather the majority of participants felt that such a determination should be made on a strategic country-by-country basis, depending on the unique combination of historical and cultural circumstances that determine social, economic and political life in a given place and time. Specific suggestions made by participants concerning which civil society actors to support included those organizations which:

  - promote human and civil rights, particularly the legal rights of women and minorities;

  - demonstrate a commitment to civic norms and practice, e.g, tolerance, inclusiveness, participation, and whose actions have "consequences" in promoting democratic governance at all levels;

  - exhibit true autonomy from the state and are based on voluntary association; and,

  - serve as a catalyst to encourage solutions to governance problems at the local level, particularly intermediary, multipurpose organizations such as development NGOs with linkages to grassroots groups and self-governing associations.

  Participants also felt strongly that USAID's priority should be given to strengthening existing organizations, not creating new ones.

- Most donors do not have a comparative advantage in working directly with NGOs and civic organizations to build their capacity for more effective participation; this goes particularly for the mass of smaller civic groups, many of which work at the subnational level. Strategies recommended to overcome this constraint included:

  - Working through intermediary organizations such as indigenous consortia and networks, and U.S. and international NGOs and professional associations to provide small grants and technical assistance.

  - Consider setting up local endowments and/or grant-making foundations such as those initiated by Kellogg and International Youth Foundations;

  - Promote "partnering" between U.S. PVOs and indigenous NGOs and civic organizations or support international NGOs with local affiliates as providers of technical assistance; and,

  - Draw-upon the expertise of regional African organizations such as development NGOs, networks, consortia, universities and professional associations; support networking.

- Several participants stressed the obstacles and challenges which USAID and other donors confront in the area of supporting African civil society, including notably resource constraints. This leads donors to have to make difficult choices and prioritize among numerous actions, particularly in times of decreasing budget allocations and the stringencies of "managing for results." Donors also need to adapt their technical assistance to significant differences among countries in the

world and even within Africa. Various participants described differences not only between Francophone and Anglophone Africa but even among the countries within these linguistic subregions. Donor support must also take into consideration the stage of a country's political development since prioritizing civil society assistance was in large measure a function of where a given country fell along this continuum, i.e., from pre-transition through democratic transition and into consolidation. One often needs to be responsive even as one tries to plan and be proactive.

Although there was a divergence of opinion on numerous issues and topics, the majority of participants at the two-day civil society workshop recognized the need to be engaged in helping to support civil society in Africa. The components of civil society, the broad-based groups that one normally associates with civil society, the network and communication among those groups, are at the heart of what USAID and many development agencies are trying to accomplish. Much of what USAID, for example, does in the areas of population, environment, economic growth and of course, strengthening democratic institutions, involves working with private voluntary organizations and indigenous non-governmental organizations. USAID considers these associations natural partners in the struggle for sustainable development and intends to remain engaged in supporting them.

CIVIL SOCIETY, DEMOCRACY AND DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA

Proceedings of a Workshop for Development Practitioners

Hosted by U.S. Agency for International Development

June 9-10, 1994
Washington, D.C.

ANNEX 1

WORKSHOP AGENDA

US AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT-Hosted Workshop on CIVIL SOCIETY, DEMOCRACY AND DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA

DATES: June 9 and 10, 1994

PLACE: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace Conference Center
2400 N Street, NW, 8th Floor
Washington, D.C.

WORKSHOP PURPOSE: To answer the question: What does the development practitioner in USA or in other agencies need to know to be effective in influencing civil societies in Africa to join more fu in promoting democratic governance?

AGENDA

Day One	**June 9, 1994**
8:30	Continental Breakfast
9:00	Welcome Mr. William Kaschak (Director, AFR/ONI, USAID)
9:10	Keynote Address Dr. Carol Lancaster (Deputy Administrator, Bureau for Africa, USAID) Moderator: Dr. Edmond Keller (UCLA)
9:20	Introduction to Workshop: Issues for Donors Mr. William Kaschak (Director, AFR/ONI, USAID) Dr. Joel Barkan (University of Iowa)
9:30	**SESSION I:** Civil Society: Definitions and Descriptions Overview Panel Dr. Dwayne Woods (Purdue University) Mr. Mamadou Diouf (CODESRIA) Commentator Dr. Ebere Onwudiwe (Central State University)
10:30	Coffee Break
10:45	"Historical and Cross Cultural Contexts of Civil Society in Africa" Dr. Peter P. Ekeh (SUNY, Buffalo)
11:15	"The Heterogeneity of Associations in Africa" Dr. Aili Mari Tripp (University of Wisconsin, Madison)

12:15	Open Discussion
12:30	Lunch (served at Conference Center) Small Working Groups on Session I Presentations
1:15	Poster Walk Dr. Ken Kusterer (American University)
1:30	**SESSION II:** NGOs as Instruments for Sustainable Development and Democracy: Methods and Issues
	Moderator: Joan Atherton (AFR/DP, USAID)
	A) Overview Panel Dr. Shelby Lewis (Clark Atlanta University) Dr. Simon Fass (University of Texas, Dallas)
2:15	B) Examples of NGOs as Part of Civil Society
	Abdul Hamidou Sy, FONGS, Dakar, Senegal - federation of grassroots primary associations working on health and agricultural issues with an advocacy role
	Marren Awour Akatsa-Bukachi, YWCA, Nairobi, Kenya - national NGO working on education, health and related issues. Works with U.S. PVO World Education.
	Emelia Adjepong, FIDA, Accra, Ghana - Ghana branch of International Federation of Women Lawyers, an NGO working on civic action and education, and public advocacy
3:30	Break
3:45	Small Group Discussions
4:45	General Discussion (with small group reports)
5:30	Concluding Remarks Dr. Edmond Keller (UCLA)
6:00	Reception: Host William Kaschak (Director, AFR/ONI, USAID) (at Conference Center)

Day Two	June 10, 1994
8:30	Continental Breakfast
9:00	Opening Remarks Mr. Nathaniel Fields (Deputy Assistant Administrator, Bureau for Africa, USAID)
9:15	**SESSION III:** The Political Context for African Civil Society "Democratization and Governance in Africa: Typology and General Trends" Dr. Guy Martin (Clark Atlanta University)
9:45	Commentators Dr. John Holm (Cleveland State University) Dr. Robert Charlick (Senior Governance Advisor, ARD)
10:15	Coffee Break
10:30	**SESSION IV:** Constraints and Limits of Civil Society to Influence Government "The Vertical and Horizontal Dimensions to Associational Politics in Sub-Saharan Africa" Dr. Dwayne Woods (Purdue University)
11:00	Commentators Dr. Donald Rothchild (University of California at Davis) Dr. Mae King (Howard University)
11:30	General Discussion
12:00	Lunch (served at Conference Center)
1:30	**SESSION V:** Implications for Donors

Breakout Group Discussions

Most of the afternoon will be taken up with small group discussions. Participants from other regional bureaus in USAID will be asked in the course of those discussions to comment on "lessons learned" and whether what is presented in this workshop is or is not applicable to civil society in their regions. All the participants will be asked to address the following questions:

- Does an understanding of civil society in an African context dictate any different emphasis for a donor agency involved in democracy/governance programs? Who are the major players in civic action in Africa?

- Should certain kinds of civil society actors, notably those engaging in civic action, be given greater emphasis in USAID's efforts to strengthen civil society?

- How can a donor agency best promote the "mutual engagement" of the state and civil society?

- How should USAID's commitment to sustainable development and to participatory development influence its choice of assistance to civil society? What should it imply for support to civic action at the grassroots level?

- How should USAID's commitment to managing for results affect its choice of civil society support activities?

- What specific mechanisms have worked the best to provide desired results in USAID's efforts to support civil society?

3:30	Break
3:45	Reports of Small Groups and General Discussion
5:00	Concluding Remarks Mr. Robert Shoemaker (Chief, AFR/ONI/DG, USAID

CIVIL SOCIETY, DEMOCRACY AND DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA

Proceedings of a Workshop for Development Practitioners

Hosted by U.S. Agency for International Development

June 9-10, 1994
Washington, D.C.

ANNEX 2

WORKSHOP PARTICIPANT LIST

Civil Society Workshop
List of Invitees

NAME	ORGANIZATION
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Curt Grimm	AID/AFR.DP
Dick Day	AID/AFR.DP
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Dana Fischer	AID/AFR.SWA
*Edmond Keller	UCLA
*Ebere Onwudiwe	Central State
*Peter Ekeh	SUNY
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*Donald Rothchild	UCLA
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*Robert Charlick	ARD
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*Ken Kusterer	American Univ.
*Joan Atherton	AID/AFR/DP
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*Abdul Hamidou Sy	FONGS
*Marren Awour Akatsa-Bukachi	YWCA
*Emilia Adjepong	FIDA
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Katherine Marshall	World Bank
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Keith Klein	IFES
Nancy Farmer	World Bank
Ned McMahon	NDI
Ed Stewart	IRI
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Greg Simpkins	IRI
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David Burgess	Wrld. Learning
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Steve Sharp	AID/Global
Garland Christopher	AID/ARTS
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ANNEX 3

COMMISSIONED PAPERS:

SESSIONS I - IV

Session 1: Civil Society Definitions and Descriptions

Session 2: NGOs as Instruments for Sustainable Development & Democracy

Session 3: The Political Context for African Civil Society

Session 4: Constraints and Limits of Civil Society to Influence Government

CIVIL SOCIETY, DEMOCRACY AND DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA

SESSION I PAPERS:

CIVIL SOCIETY: DEFINITIONS AND DESCRIPTIONS

Dr. Ebere Onwudiew, Central State University: "Civil Society in Africa: A Comment"

Dr. Peter Ekeh, SUNY/Buffalo: "Historical & Cross-Cultural Contexts of Civil Society in Africa"

Dr. Aili Marie Tripp, University of Wisconsin/Madison: The Heterogeniety of Associations in Africa"

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Civil Society in Africa
A Comment

Ebere Onwudiwe, Ph.D.
Central State University

I would like to start by saying that there is more than one level of government in any African country. There is a national government level which is the most powerful and structured along the line of Weberian rationalization of authority, differentiation of bureaucratic structures and institutions, and mobilization of resources that define these processes. However, in Africa other levels of government (subnational) levels including a network of ethnic and subnational centers of power and other associational (e.g., religious) groups are also important players in African politics even though the national level government (whether autocratic as in Zaire, military as in Nigeria, or some form of democracy as in Senegal) is dominant by virtue of its control of central political authority and the incorporation of the greatest number of people under its jurisdiction.

Put another way, we must resist the temptation to discuss civil society in most post-colonial African countries as if these countries have one level of government. Indeed, when we look separately at the subnational power centers and the national governments, we may find one or two facts: 1) that they are at different levels of political civilization and 2) that in many African countries, the central government is far less civil than most of the subnational government levels such as ethnically based traditional and rural governments.

Frequently, it is these subnational centers of power along with their peoples, traditions and customs that we have in mind when we talk about "African societies". However, we apply the term "civil society" only to the behavior of actors at the national level of government. The focus of my comment is this: if we look at civil society at the subnational level, we see that Africa is doing well. However, we have reason to worry about civil society in Africa when we turn our attention to the national level of government. I think that this is one of the points that development practitioners in USAID and other U.S. agencies need to note as they perform the difficult task of helping Africa to build enduring democratic and free market institutions.

Happily, the statement of purpose of this workshop by emphasizing the need to "explore the different cultural influences of religion, kinship and ethnicity on associational life in Africa" shows sensitivity to this heterogeneity of Africa' polity - a factor, I admit, which exacerbates the problems of democratization and nation-building at the central level of government in most African countries.

Indeed, for each African country, the term "civil society" should perhaps be used as a plural - "civil societies." To illustrate, the recent sabotage of transition to democracy by Nigeria's military officials cannot be explained solely by the corruption of Nigeria's military elite. If we did so, we can say that civil society is retarded in Nigeria. And we will be right. But such a conclusion is unfair to the subnational levels of government where politics remains civil even as their delegates at the center practice uncivilized national politics. The military sabotage of Nigeria's transition to democracy is not just a product of "uncivil society" at the central government level. There is also the dimension that deals with the competition to control national power by ethnic, religious and regional subnational power centers. Religious and ethnic groups of the states in Nigeria's northern region may be relatively less sympathetic to democratic or other form of governance at the center which is not controlled by northerners.

The argument is that the earlier exposure to the west of the southern religious and ethnic groups puts their northern counterparts in a competitive disadvantage viz a viz the southerners. Of course, many Nigerians will tell you that this argument is tired, that any advantage the southerners got for meeting the white man first should have disappeared due to northern control of national government for most of Nigeria's years of self-rule. But look at the last names of those who make such arguments. You'll find they are southerners.

The point is that efforts to build democratic institutions in Africa must begin with the understanding that each country's civic culture is diverse and is more a product of struggles between ethnic, religious and regional delegates than encounters between modernization and traditionalism, between forces of incivility and democratic forces, because at the ethnic levels of politics from which the delegates come to the center, politics is quite civil.

Political and economic development models introduced by outgoing colonial powers ignored the diverse goals of the ethnic and religious centers of power. The infrastructure of democratic polity (political parties, free press, independent judiciary, etc.) which they imagined would guarantee civil society in Africa produced instead civil wars and military dictatorships in much of Africa. This is because loyalty needed for the civil operations of these institutions were left behind at the local and ethnic levels of politics by national level politicians. This unfortunate situation is often blamed by many scholars and commentators on the imposition of foreign systems of governance and Africa's putative unfamiliarity with parliamentary systems and participatory politics. I am often amazed at the popularity of this explanation. How long can it take for one to learn that it is better to be civil than uncivil? That separation of power, checks and balances, free speech and peaceful transfers of power are better than the horrors of one party and military dictatorship? Africans are not stupid. yet, this scornful commiseration is so entrenched in the literature that anyone who ventures to challenge it will have to be very persuasive indeed. I expect, therefore, that there may be some people here today that would disagree with my view. Nevertheless, let me give in to the temptation by reiterating two points: 1) Africa's society is adequately civil at the local and traditional levels of governance; 2) The uncivilized level of government in Africa is the central government dominated by cosmopolitan Africans.

I define cosmopolitan Africans as those Africans who live in the cities (specifically, the political and economic elites among them) who see government as a most lucrative industry. It is this class of people who are most likely to interact with USAID and other democratizing influences.

If one is to promote civil society in Africa by means of carrot and stick, the stick should be applied on the hides of the cosmopolitans while the carrot should be used to nourish the democratic proclivities of the locals. Thus, we grow democracy where seeds have germinated and its ancient roots nourished by tradition and custom, and from above, we cut off any fat cosmopolitan tree whose useless branches hide local democratic seedlings from the sun.

I know that the view I've just shared glosses over many practical questions. But rural development and employment is one way of promoting enduring civility in African national politics. We all know that all indications of uncivilized politics in Africa including disrespect for the constitution, sporadic violence and political assassinations, military coups and mutinies, etc., happen at the central levels of government. None of these diseases afflict the subnational level.

This tells me that rural governments are more civil than national governments. The question is why? The key to the answer lies in the fact that post independence governments in Africa are organized around

the interest of national politicians (military and civilian) and their cohorts. At the national level, politics is seen as competition between ethnic groups which by definition constitute "nations" in their own rights. Indeed, we can conceive political competition between subnational groups as "inter(sub)national" politics, where as intrasubnational politics is "domestic politics." The point I am struggling to make is this: in many ethnically heterogeneous African countries, national or center politics is politics between ethnic or subnational levels of power. Therefore, national level politics is closer to global or international politics than to domestic politics. Domestic politics exists only at the subnational or ethnic or rural levels. As we all know, international politics at the global level, is less civilized than domestic politics. Indeed, many scholars see contemporary international politics as primitive and characterized by Hobessian "state of nature" where only the strong survives and life is short and brutish.

And isn't that the case in Congo (Zaire), Nigeria, Chad, Burundi, Sudan, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Angola, Liberia, South Africa, Somalia and most recently, Rwanda, where struggles for power at the national level and civil wars have cut short the lives of millions of Africans.

The irony of civil society in Africa is that while it is alive and well at the rural and level of government which is rooted in ethnicity, it is sick, non-existent or dead at the national level of government in many African countries. Isn't it, therefore, funny that ethnicity in Africa, the most internally civil example of African polities, and as I have tried to argue, the most relevant in Africa's national level politics is derided by scholars as a backward and primitive epiphenomenon that would hopefully disappear through political engineering by "modern" national government.[1]

In summary, I think that civil society in Africa can be strengthened at the micro- or sub-national (ethnic) level of politics. It can also benefit from active promotion of grassroots democracy through the mobilization of non-national elites including citizen groups working on human rights, labor movements, opposition movement and rural development. In democracy, people at this level see hope, political empowerment and economic future while the freewheeling national level military and civilian politicians see only the loss of power and privileges. To the latter, civil society at the national level of politics is, understandably, a radical idea.

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[1] See Melson, R. and Wolpe, H., "Modernization and the Practice of Communalism: A Theoretical Perspective," APSR, V. 64, pp. 1112-1130.

Historical and Cross-Cultural Contexts of Civil Society in Africa

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Among the major concepts that have been borrowed from Western academic usages for analyzing and studying politics and society in Africa, *civil society* stands out as a term that nearly escaped employment in African studies. From the small beginnings of African studies in colonial society anthropology and throughout its multi-disciplinary expansion in the post-World War II period up to the mid-1980s, the term civil society did not attract the attention of social scientists and social historians concerned with African societies. It is remarkable, for instance, that civil society is not listed in the ample index of Gwendolyn Carter and Patrick O'Meara's (1985) edited volume African Independence: The First Twenty-Five Years that celebrated more than a quarter-century of scholarship on Africa in the United States, representing state-of-the-discipline accounts in many of its chapters. And yet, if a few short years since that book's publication, civil society has burst into prominence in serious circles and in the main publication media of African studies. The absence of this concept for so many years and its new prominence in African studies should not be ruled as accidental, however. On the contrary, an intellectual history of civil society will help to explain its late arrival and to underscore its urgency in Africa's particular circumstances. Nor should we assume that the structures and processes that are currently labelled civil society in Africa are new. Historians and social scientists in the per-1985 period used other concepts and terms to designate phenomena that this fresh construct of civil society now claims for its domain. It is important that we reconcile the new label of civil society with the old concepts and terms that were used to characterize these same objects before civil society acquired its recent wave of importance.

Civil society is unique in African studies in another sense. Most other concepts that are employed in the study of society, politics and economy in Africa have come directly from the experiences of their uses in the West. In the case of civil society, on the other hand, this term has come only indirectly from the West. It has been borrowed most immediately from its application in the former Soviet bloc where it was resurrected from nineteenth century Western social thought. This linkage is also important for understanding the essence of civil society in modern Africa: What are the common conditions that have allowed its usage in Eastern Europe and Africa?

Given the circumstances of its unusual lateness in securing a place in African studies, it would be unproductive to insist that the notion of civil society in Africa should be understood exclusively in its own African terms. A comparative perspective is important for underscoring the unique meaning that civil society has acquired in Africa. Its connotations can only be fully captured, of course, by relating the concept of civil society to Africa's political history. While building up a comparative perspective for its examination, this paper will locate the meaning of civil society in Africa's history and political culture.

The Intellectual Context of Civil Society

The concept of civil society would have been readily incorporated into African studies long before the mid-1980s if it had been a standard term in contemporary Western social science from whose experiences the constructs of modern African studies have largely been packaged. The fact of the matter is that the term civil society has disappeared from the active discipline of comparative politics and was, for instance, only available to graduate students in political science and political sociology in the 1950s through the

1970s from the history of Western political thought.[2] It has become important once more in Western scholarship largely because dissidents in Central and Eastern Europe found the nineteenth-century Western construct of civil society useful for explaining their circumstances in the epochal changes that followed Gorbachev's doctrines of *glasnost* and *perestroika* in their region.[3] The ensuing collapse of the Cold War affected politics and economy in Africa in ways that resembled aspects of the change in Eastern Europe, inclining scholars of African affairs to resort to similar viewpoints in accounting for the changes in Africa. The concept of civil society thus virtually spilled over to African studies from its employment in Eastern Europe.

However, the uses of civil society in Western public affairs up to the nineteenth-century, its subsequent disappearance from the day-to-day concerns of Western social science for nearly a century, and its resurrection in the mid-1980s following the thaw and eventually the collapse of the Cold War and the liberalization of politics in Eastern Europe and Africa, are not arbitrary matters. The original use of civil society in the West and its recent employment in Eastern Europe and Africa share a common occasion: Civil society has tended to be used in periods of revolutionary change and transition from totalitarian political circumstances to ones that promote the freedom of the individual. In this sense, civil society has been treated as a foil to totalitarian historical epochs. It thus serves as a theory of individual freedom from control by an overbearing state. The following indication of its original use and meaning in the study of Western public affairs will help to guide the parameters of its analysis in Africa.

The Origins of Civil Society in the West

Civil society became an important concept in modern Western Europe at a time when the liberty of the individual was an issue of political contention against a background of totalitarian tendencies. A good illustration of this intellectual background of the construct of civil society may be gained from Jean-

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[2] Not surprisingly, the most important compilations on the literature and constructs of the social sciences up until the 1960s did not include civil society in its pages: "The editors of the International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences (Sills 1968) did not think the term important enough to warrant inclusion" (Bendix et al 1987: 3). In contrast, a recent similar publication, Blackwell Dictionary of Twentieth Century Social Thought, paid full attention to civil society; it has a full entry on civil society (see Kumar 1993) and several others of its essays have dealt with its subject matter.

[3] See Kumar (1993: 76): "New life was breathed into the concept [of civil society] by the swift-moving changes in Central and Eastern Europe in the late 1970s and 1980s. Dissidents in the region turned to the concept of civil society as a weapon against the all-encompassing claims of the totalitarian state ... In the wake of the successful revolutions of 1989 throughout the region, the concept of civil society gained immensely in popularity. To many intellectuals it carried the promise of a privileged route to the post-communist, pluralist society ... Western intellectuals, too, were enthused anew with the concept. For them it suggested a new perspective on old questions of democracy and participation in societies where these practices seemed to have become moribund."

Jacques Rousseau's advocacy of radical democracy and its adoption by the French Revolution.[4] Rousseau (1762:25-26) contended that

> when cabals and partial associations are formed at the expense of the great association, the will of each such association ... is private with regard to the State: it can be said no longer that there are as many voters as men, but only as many as there are associations ... It is therefore of the utmost importance for obtaining the expression of the general will, that no partial society should be formed in the State, and that every citizen should speak his opinion entirely from himself.

This mandate of the general will influenced the early activities of the French Revolution, including the harsh terms of its so-called Loi Le Chaplier of 1791 that baldly stipulated that "It shall not be permissible for citizens in certain occupations to meet together in defense of their pretended common interests. There must be no more guilds in the State, but only the individual interest of each citizen and the general interest" (cited in Bendix et al 1987).

The triumph of Western political culture is that it reversed such totalitarian tendencies, issuing instead in liberal democracy that it largely grounded on high regard for the autonomy of free associations. Rousseau to the contrary, it is the supreme discovery of Western political development that rather than being inimical to individual freedom, these "partial" associations secured the individual's liberty from violation by the state and "the general will." It is the extraordinary growth of new professional guilds, trade unions, political parties and a great number of other voluntary associations that became the essence of the concept of civil society in Western Europe and the United States up to late nineteenth century. This development received ample celebration and indeed justification in the scholarship of the period. It includes Durkheim's 1925 [1957] thesis on professional ethics and Montesquieu's notion of pouvoirs intermediares; it is also discernible in the role of unattached intellectuals in Mannheim's (1956) theory of culture, all of which are deemed to promote values that contribute to the individual's independence from arbitrary state control.

Individual liberty is thus the central concern of the theory of civil society. As Antony Black puts it, "the values of civil society comprise, first, personal security in the sense of freedom from the arbitrary passions of others, and freedom from domination in general;" and "We may identify the central ideal of civil society as personal independence and its central imperative as respect for persons (Black 1984: 32,43). If the ends of the theory of civil society are, thus, individual liberty and personal security, its means of realizing these have been acknowledged from the sheer experience of Western political history to be freedom for associations in which the individual can freely participate with other citizens for the purpose of enhancing their collective goals and the rule of law that binds the state and voluntary associations to impersonal ground rules that mandate their existence in a common public domain. As a point to return to in applying these ideas in the comparative study of civil society in Africa, it is important to note from this definition, that not all associations qualify to be included under civil society's

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[4] The modern meaning of civil society dates back to the period of the French Revolution. As Bendix et al (1987:12) have pointed out, "Prior to the French Revolution, the term civil society was another word for high society ... of the ruling groups concerned with the interests of king and country." Also see Gellner (1991:495): "Historically, the expression civil society has of course been used in a number of senses -- as opposed to savagery and/or anarchy, as opposed to the Church, or as opposed to the state. It is the context of this last opposition or confrontation which is uppermost in the minds of those who have so eagerly returned to this notion."

label. It is only those free associations whose operations have the consequences, where intended or unintended, of promoting individual liberty and whose existence is related to the functioning of the state and the public domain that would be so labelled.

Such a view of the origin of civil society in the West will enable us to identify the analytical elements that will be useful in the comparative study of civil society elsewhere. First, civil society is essentially a reactive construct. It is therefore important to identify the totalitarian political formations to which civil society is a foil. Second, civil society is teleological; its goal is to promote the prospects of individual liberty. Third, associations and processes that directly or indirectly promote individual freedom are the focus of the study of civil society. They are the *means* for realizing the *ends* of civil society. Fourth, the relationships between such associations and processes, on the one hand, and the state, on the other, are central to considerations of civil society because they share the common political space of the public domain inside which individual's liberty attains its meaning and significance.

Background to Civil Society in Africa: Colonialism and the Dictatorship of the Postcolonial State

Methodologically, civil society in Africa will make full sense only if its background is traced to the structures and processes to which it is reacting. In Africa's political history, these will be found in European colonialism and in its aftermath, the dictatorship of the postcolonial state. At any rate, the implementation of any scheme to promote civil society can only be meaningful if there is a clear understanding of the abyss of incivility from which we must climb.

Colonialism and the Formation of the Public Realm in Africa

It is on such analytical grounds that there is justification for beginning the study of civil society in Africa with considerations of colonialism's contributions to the dynamics of modern African politics. Colonialism's importance for modern Africa is best weighed in terms of the social formations that occurred under the changes wrought in its regime. Three types of such social formations have been identified. First, indigenous political institutions -- including indigenous forms of rulership -- were transformed, forming new anchors in the changed circumstances of colonialism. Second, colonialism entailed the importation of certain models of Western institutions, structures and processes into Africa. The most outstanding examples of this second type of social formation are the colonial state and bureaucracy. Outside of their native habitat in the West, these institutions acquired new meanings, often shedding their Western moral nuances. Third, certain fresh structures and processes -- that were not in existence before colonialism and that were not imported from the West -- emerged in the new colonial situation. One major instance of this third type of social formation in colonialism is the emergence of a distinct type of public domain that is remarkably different from the public realm in the West.[5]

Expressed colonial policies and the day-to-day exigencies of colonialism combined to breed a new public domain that uniquely had dual tendencies. Colonial policies in Africa encouraged two distinct political and cultural spheres, one identifiable with the colonial state and the other intended for "native" affairs. This is best seen in Frederick Lugard's doctrine of Indirect Rule and the dual mandate in British colonial rule in Africa. The spirit in Lugard's policies is best captured from his views concerning what he terms "the true conception of the inter-relation of colour: complete uniformity in ideals ... [but] in matters social and racial a separate path, each pursuing his own inherited traditions, preserving his own race-

[5] For a full statement of these social formation see Ekeh 1983.

purity and race-pride" (Lugard 1922:87). The typical colonial state of Lugard's construction was only marginally relevant for ordinary colonized Africans. Their political existence was fulfilled in a different public domain where colonial "native" politics were transacted. The elite, both traditional and those Africans who acquired Western opportunities and means, operated in both of these public domains, compelling and creating stable relationships between the two realms. It is these public domains that I identified as the ***civic public*** and ***primordial public*** realms nearly twenty years ago (see Ekeh 1975).

The colonial state was relatively tolerant with regard to the management of the affairs of the primordial public which were largely under the control of local indigenous aristocracies and leadership. But it was dictatorial in its management of the civic public realm. The colonial state regulated the uses of the political space of the civic public realm, monopolizing its more important aspects including airwaves of radio transmission and all other means of mass communications. Colonialism's dictatorship was borne out of its nature and from central features of colonial rule in Africa. First, colonialism entailed the banning of politics. Power at the national level in the colonies was monopolized by the colonizers and was not available for contest among the colonized. The little power that was available at the local level was carefully regulated by restricted administrative practices of colonial rule. This is particularly the case with reference to interethnic politics which were severely limited. Second, there was no rule of law in the colonies. Rather, rule be decrees replaced the rule of law.[6] Significantly, colonial rulers were not subject to the same decrees as their subjects. Third, colonial rule allowed little room for the separation of powers. Like the Roman colonial ruler Pontius Pilate of Biblical fame, colonial rulers in Africa combined administrative, judicial and legislative roles in the government of their colonies. Significantly, there was only a thin line between the military forces and the police. Both of them exercised similar functions of enforcing domestic peace, with very little opportunity for engaging the military forces in the protection of the colonial state's borders.

In these circumstances, the relationship between ordinary individuals and the colonial state was minimal. Their birth or death was of no interest to it and they were unrecorded. It would be no exaggeration to say that the colonized felt intimidated by the colonial state and alienated from it. But individuals had close ties with their primordial public realms that took care of their welfare and fought to enhance their share of whatever came from the colonial state. In turn, individuals contributed considerable sums of money and resources to build up their primordial public realms. Thus, for instance, in several regions they taxed themselves to build town halls, dispensaries and even high schools. The consequence of individuals' alienation from the state and of the prominence of the primordial public in their lives was that there was no common and generic definition of the human person across the terrain of the colonial state. Individuals had little moral value outside their primordial publics.

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[6] "Rule by decree," Arendt (1951: 244) noted, "has conspicuous advantages for the domination of far-flung territories with heterogenous populations and for a policy of oppression ... It can easily overcome the variety of local customs and need not rely on the necessarily slow process of development of general law." Also see Dudley (1973: 25-6): "colonial rule was, for all practical purposes, military rule ... Whatever legitimacy ... the colonial authorities possessed derived ... from the monopoly of the means of violence ... Colonial administrators were in fact 'praetors' and the system of rule was authoritarian and dictatorial."

The State and the Management of the Public Domain in Postcolonial Africa

The drama of modern African politics is that the postcolonial state has essentially adopted the ideology of colonial government and expanded the patterns of dictatorship in the management of the public domain. This is in large part because the decolonization of African politics in the post-World War II era did not question the ideology and the meaning of government but was instead principally concerned about the mechanisms of transfer of power from alien rulers to indigenous African rulers. In the hindsight of anti-colonial nationalism, it may now be correctly said that the unique individual and his or her liberties had no place in the reckoning of decolonization. What was uppermost in the minds of Africa's new leaders was nation-building understood and defined in supraindividual terms, requiring in several cases the sacrificing of individual liberties (see Davidson 1992).

Since the scope of governments in the postcolonial era has become bigger than was available to the colonial state in virtually every African country, the dimensions of state dictatorship have become enormous. One-party dictatorships, as in Ghana, Guinea and Kenya (see Zolberg 1966; Widner 1992); personal dictatorships as in Zaire and Malawi; and military dictatorship as in Nigeria, Togo and scores of other nations on the continent: all these have been intense forms of dictatorship that completely disregarded the values of civil society and respect for the individual. In virtually all African nations, the state barred other organizations from using the political space of the public domain, exceeding the claims of the colonial state in this regard.[7] At least, the postcolonial state has come to assume that the political space of the public domain can only be used at its pleasure and that permission to use it can be revoked on its sole judgment. For instance, newspapers in Nigeria have been closed down on several occasions on this ground in recent times. The state routinely monopolizes the airwaves as a matter of course. Military rulers and other personal dictators have generally exempted themselves from the decrees by which others are ruled. The absence of political party competition has left the individual unrepresented by any organizations operating from the civic public realm. A patent consequence of the dictatorship involving the military in domestic politics is that the police forces have become weak and insensitive to civilian needs, as they become heavily subordinated to military control (see, e.g., Lawyers Committee for Human Rights 1992). The use of military forces for domestic peacekeeping has expanded in much of Africa. In most of these respects postcolonial African dictators have simply magnified the patterns of colonial rule, but without the usual restraints imposed from the parliaments in the metropolitan headquarters of the colonial rulers.

The dictatorship of the postcolonial African state has been sharply arbitrary and brutal because it is inefficient. It was protected and sponsored in most instances by the protagonists of the Cold War as they jockeyed for support from African dictators. The current political distress on the continent has arisen largely because the Soviet Union and increasing the West have withdrawn the usual amount of support and protection that they accorded their supporters among military and personal dictators in Africa. In the absence of such Cold War support and protection, the inefficiencies of the African postcolonial state are becoming painfully obvious at a time when the gulf between the individual and the state remains wide and deep (thus see Azarya and Chazan 1987). Indeed, the alienation of individuals from the state's domain has deepened their commitments to their primordial enclaves. All over Africa, the ordinary person has no national definition; he or she seeks recognition from exclusive primordial publics as the

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[7] Thus, see Mamdani (1993: 314): "Whereas state-controlled broadcast media co-existed with state-supervised print media in the colonial period, both came under state control under the new [postcolonial] regime."

failures and brutalities of the state deepen. The immediate consequence is that the elements of the primordial public have flourished outside the state's purview.

In the face of such pervasive dictatorial tendencies, it seems difficult to maintain that civil society is alive and well in Africa. Certainly, there are plenty of organizations in Africa that operate outside the orbit of the civic public realm which is under the control of the dictatorship of the postcolonial state. How many of these qualify to be called civil society and why? Having cleared the methodological background to our understanding of civil society, we may now confront these questions directly.

Civil Society and the Issues of the Public Domain

Civil society is a prominent instance of that category of intellectual usages that philosopher Gallie (1955-56: 169) has characterized as ***essentially contested concepts*** which "inevitably involve endless disputes about their proper uses on the part of their users." Essentially contested concepts provoke debates on their essence and their applications from various perspectives. In its broadest representation, civil society refers to those areas in the overall society in which there are institutions and associations that exist and function in the public arena independent of control by the state. But such a broad definition provokes serious differences of opinion. Contestation on the meaning and applications of civil society in Africa seems to center around two issues. First, there are substantial differences regarding those associations that properly constitute civil society in Africa. Second, there are strong views on the relationship between the presumed absence of a strong civil society and the weak democratic pulse on the African continent.

The Scope of Civil Society in Africa

Although the literature on civil society in Africa is relatively new and still thin, there are shades of differences in its implied meaning among its users. Broadly, there are two identifiable positions on what constitutes civil society in Africa. One conceives of civil society as an ensemble of organizations that operate outside the state's arena and that can act in place of the state. The other considers civil society as associations that interact with the state and are capable of limiting its totalitarian tendencies.

The first position is implied in the works of several leading scholars of African affairs who have portrayed African states as frail and arbitrary and some of whom canvass for alternatives to the state (see, for a few examples, Hyden 1983; Jackson and Rosberg 1985; Gallaghy 1987; Midgal 1988; 1992). Despite their perennial problems, however, these states continue to occupy a conspicuous place in African public affairs, not seriously challenged by other organizations in African nations. Michael Bratton (1989: 410-11) paints this paradox dramatically in a paper that has grown influential and that represents this point of view quite effectively:

> The African state is weak by any conventional measure of institutional capacity; yet it remains the most prominent landmark on the African institutional landscape ... In Africa the state projects upwards from its surroundings like a veritable Kilimanjaro, in large part because the open plains of domestic society appear to be thinly populated with alternative institutions. At first glance, African societies seem to possess few intermediate organizations to occupy the political space between the family (broadly defined by affective ties of blood, marriage, residence, clan and ethnicity) and the state. Those civic structures that do exist are usually small in scale and local in orientation. In this lilliputian environment, even a weak state can seem to be strong [emphasis added].

Having limited his conception of civil society to "civic structures" that stand between the family and the state, it is possible that Bratton has not been able to capture the full range of civil society because he has not included in his counting clan and ethnic associations which function in the public domain in the full glare of the state.[8] More importantly, the implied relationship between such ensemble of associations of civil society and the state is painted as a contrasting one, since they could serve as "alternative institutions." He does conjure the picture of civil society as existing "in the political space beyond the state's purview." It is true that given the small returns from the huge intellectual and material investments that were intended to improve the African state in the era of modernization theory and beyond, many scholars have grown weary of the African state and appear to support alternative institutions instead. But that would be creating a new meaning for civil society -- one that craves for alternative institutions that will carry out the traditional functions of the state by making room for "civil societies, in the broadest sense of a bevy of institutions for protecting collective interests" (Bratton 1989: 411).

The second view, reviewed and rejected by Bratton (1989: 418), locates civil society on the same political space as the state.[9] It sees civil society as a congeries of associations that coexist with the state in the public arena and that are capable of limiting and breaching the inherent totalitarian tendencies of the state. Such Tocquevillian conception of civil society has a hallowed tradition in political thought. Using examples from nineteenth century America, Alexis de Tocqueville (1966) offers a picture of a sound political culture of democracy as that existing in societies in which voluntary associations freely operate and mediate between political society and civil life. It is these voluntary organizations that curtail the excesses of the state and thus hold back the state's natural propensity toward tyranny. Jean-Francois Bayart's view of civil society in Africa is Tocquevellian in this sense, that it invests civil society with the capacity of countermanding the state's powers. Borrowing from Fossaert (1981), Bayart (1986) defines civil society as a "'society in its relations with the state' or, more precisely, as the process by which society seeks to 'breach' and counteract the simultaneous 'totalisation' unleashed by the state" (Bayart 1986: 111). He adds, "Civil society exists only in so far as there are self-consciousness of its existence and of its opposition to the state (Bayart 1986: 117). His meaning of civil society becomes clearer when he defines it, rather incidentally, in the popular view: "Many ... invest civil society with the capacity to resist state authoritarianism or totalitarianism" (1986: 117). With respect to Cameroon, the African country in whose affairs he has become an authority, Bayart contends that "the organization of civil society is an obstacle to the paramountcy of the state." Thus, the associations that concern Bayart in his analysis of civil society in Africa are those that are in direct touch with the state and possess the capacity to breach the state's intimidating powers. Clearly, these do not exhaust the scope of association life in Africa and underrepresent civil society when its meaning is expanded beyond manifest capacity to confront the state. The truth of the matter is, in African circumstances it is often difficult to foretell which organizations will challenge the state effectively. Thus, in civil war in Nigeria the greatest threat

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[8] Bratton's meaning of civil society appears to follow from Hegel's definition: "It is to Hegel that we owe the modern meaning of civil society. In the *Philosophy of Right* (1821), civil society is the sphere of ethical life interposed between the family and the state" (Kumar 1993: 76).

[9] Bratton (1989: 418) sees the differences between his position and this second view differently. He thinks its is flawed because it "portrays civil society in Africa ... in oppositional terms ... [and] limits associational life to activity that is at odd with the state." This seems to be an unfair interpretation of Bayart's position in civil society and is in any case not the defining difference between the two positions that I outline in this section of this paper.

to the legitimacy of the Nigerian state came from a rural organization, agbekoya, which no one could have foreseen as a viable source of challenge to the activities of the state (see Beer 1976; Beer and Williams 1976). In other words, it is important that in defining civil society in Africa, care is taken to include associations and institutions that possess not only ***manifest*** but also ***latent*** capacity to confront the state.

In any case, the most important attribute of civil society is its occupancy of the public domain. Totalitarian regimes, as in Nazi Germany and Communist Russia, lack any civil society because their state regimes monopolize the uses of the public domain. Ultimately, it is the management of the public domain that can and does affect the constitution of civil society in any nation. And yet the public domain in Africa is divided first between the civic public realm and the primordial public realm and then fragmented among the primordial publics. This fragmentation of the public domain clearly affects what constitutes civil society and how its associations function in the public arena.

The occupancy of the public domain is important for understanding civil society in Africa because it highlights an aspect of African political thought that has not been given any reasonable attention, namely, ownership of the public space in which the state operates. Stretching back to European colonialism in Africa, and in certain areas before colonial rule,[10] the state has claimed ownership of the civic public domain. There has not been a republican assertion of ownership of the civic public domain and its political space by citizens. That remarkable anger of the ordinary man and woman in the West against public officials who transgress on their public trust has been largely absent from Africans because ordinary persons assume that the public domain in which the state operates does not belong to them. Historically, the colonial state and especially the postcolonial state have all laid claim to its ownership. On the other hand, the ordinary man and woman in Africa have been intense in asserting their ownership of their own primordial public and have effectively resisted state intrusions into it. But the segmentation of the primordial public does not mean that a sense of common ownership of the public realm across, say, ethnic lines has been thin.

Civil society requires a sense of common ownership of the public realm. The dynamics of African politics have been generated from the fact that individuals have fought to expand their, say, ethnic spheres of influence by controlling the state so as to be able to dominate the public realm and its resources for the benefit of their own primordial public. In doing so, the commonness of civil society is diminished. It is not enough of course to count how many associations operate in the public domain; it is equally important to assess how much they contribute to a sense of community that is central to civil society's conception. Indeed, the dynamics of associational life in Africa derives from the fact that associations use different resources for various ends. In other words, the study of civil society should include an

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[10] Such claims were made by Uthman dan Fodio in his ***jihad*** campaign against Hausa kings at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Foio (c. 1811: 53) had clear ideas about the ownership of the state: "The government of a country is the government of its king without question. If the king is a Muslim, his land is Muslim; if he is an Unbeliever, his land is a land of Unbelievers." Or, as he put it in his jihad memorandum, "the status of a town is the status of its ruler: if he be Muslim, the town belongs to Islam; but if he be heathen the tow is a town of heathendom" (Fodio c. 1803: 240). Fodio quoted with complete approval the warning to the Hausa king of Kano from the Sheikh Abd' Rahman As-Suyuti: "[The King] is the Shade of God ... on the Earth, for verily if he has done righteously, he has the Reward and grateful remembrance, but if he does evil, the Bondage awaits him and his people suffer" (Fodio: c. 1811: 57; emphasis added).

analysis of how much the resources of both primordial and civic publics have been used to enhance the welfare of either of these spheres of the public domain.

Associations and their Uses of the Public Domain in Africa

Associational life has been diverse and clearly more than lilliputian in its scope in scores of African countries. African associations' modes of transacting their affairs, may have served to diminish their presence. Their operations have a longstanding history to which political and sociological studies of African societies have paid enormous attention, dating back to colonial times (thus, see Coleman 1958; Hodgkin 1956; Little 1965). Most organizations labelled nationalist movements and voluntary associations up to the 1960s have persisted to modern times, although they now wear the new tag of civil society that was not available to social scientists of an earlier generation (thus see Barkan et al 1991). The recent blanket of autocracy in Africa, in the Cold War era, may have altered the style and even character of these associations -- but they are plentiful and significant. For many, they may well be a matter of life and death, as the significance of the state diminishes. In order to understand the full scope of civil society in Africa, it is important to order and classify these associations across the space and time of African society and politics.

A fair handle for understanding such a vast number of associations may be supplied from examining (i) the contexts from which they operate; (ii) the ends their operations promote and the goals they seek to advance; and (iii) the resources and means they employ in their operations. First, the ***political spaces*** occupied by these associations do define the contexts of their activities. These vary enormously, from the whole expanse of a single African nation to small segments of it. In general, these political spaces and contexts may be classified into two types, as covering the civic public realm and the primordial public realm. Associations may operate entirely within each of these or in contexts that mix up elements and values of the two realms. Second, the ***ends*** they serve and the ***goals*** they seek may also be imagined to vary according to the needs of their members in the civic public realm or in the primordial public. Third, the ***means*** and ***resources*** they employ in their operations may have their sources in either the civic public or from the primordial public. With the aid of these variables, we can arrive at a useful four-fold classification of free associations in African nations, as shown in Figure 1. I shall draw most of my illustrations of their operations from Nigerian history and politics, but their presence in other African countries can be assumed to be more or less considerable.

FIGURE 1

ASSOCIATIONS' USES OF THE PUBLIC DOMAIN'S SPACES AND RESOURCES

GOALS > MEANS	CIVIC PUBLIC	PRIMORDIAL PUBLIC
CIVIC PUBLIC	**A. Civic Public Associations** • Political Parties • Trade Unions • Student Unions • Mass Communications • Christian Churches • Islamic Mosques • Human Rights Organizations	**C. Primordial Public Associations** • Ethnic Associations
PRIMORDIAL PUBLIC	**B. Deviant Civic Associations** • Elite Secret Societies • Students' Secret Societies • Islamic Madhist Movements • Spiritual Christian Churches	**D. Indigenous Development Associations** • Development Unions • Farmers' Unions • Credit Unions • Market Women's Unions

Civic Public Associations. I use the term civic public realm to designate the political space in which the formal state operates. It is in that sense coextensive with the colonial state and its successor, the postcolonial state. There are associations and organizations that have traditionally operated in this civic public realm along with the state. Their membership have usually been open to all nationals of the nation-state. They use resources from the civic public realm and their general goals are to advance its welfare or that of their members functioning in it. In Africa's political history, this political space has featured trade unions, political parties, student unions, and elements of mass communications (including newspapers, radio and television). In the colonial period, many of these provided room for common national activities. Many confronted the colonial state, seeking to act on behalf of the welfare of colonized Africans. This political space has also featured Christian Churches and Islamic organizations that interacted with the state, in some instances seeking to protect the ordinary individual from abuse by the state and its agencies. The history of Africa is dotted with cases in which Christian Churches have challenged the state's behavior on behalf of their membership. It is Christian missionaries that exposed the atrocities in King Leopold II's so-called Congo Free State at the beginning of colonialism in the last century and early this century (see Twain 1906; Cookey 1968). Closer to our times, churches have been active in promoting civil rights in apartheid South Africa. More recently, this political space has featured

human rights organizations and the pro-democracy movements in scores of African nations. These organizations and associations -- including political parties, trade unions, student organizations, mass media, churches, and human rights organizations -- represent the ordinary Western sense of the ensemble of associations of civil society whenever they have autonomy and are not mere extensions of the state.

Right from the early history of colonialism in Africa, the state has claimed monopoly of this political space by asserting the right to issue licenses, literally, to the various voluntary associations that operate in it. Thus, Frederick Lugard barred Christian missions from emirate Northern Nigeria in colonial times on the understanding that the colonial state had full rights to control use of the political space of the civic realm. His successors, both British and Nigerians, have insisted on controlling this political space as they please. They have monopolized the airwaves as the sole property of the state. In modern Nigeria and many other postcolonial states in Africa, the associations and organizations operating in this political space have been decimated, as the state has trained the instruments of its dictatorship on it. In general, the associations that operate in this political space are constantly imperiled by the claims of state elites to possess the inherent right of controlling their activities. Political parties have been banned on many occasions, or else turned into an arm of the state in one-party states as Guinea, Kenya or Tanzania. Trade unions have been either banned, harassed or else forced to become part of the state. Student unions have been harassed, intimidated or banned. The constituent elements of mass communications have especially suffered from the state's onslaught on them. The only associations and organizations operating in the civic public realm that have survived the dictatorship of the sate in much of postcolonial Africa are Christian Churches, Islamic organizations and civil rights organizations that have international protection against state harassment. If one were to measure the extent of civil society by the capacity of the activities of associations in this political space, it would be justified to say that there is very little of it in Africa. But the tale of civil society is a lot more complex than vanishing political parties, trade unions and student organizations.

Deviant Civic Associations. The state's monopolistic claim of the ownership of the civic public realm and its tight control of its uses by groups and individuals have had great consequences for the direction of associational life in Africa's political history. It has had a displacement effect, with frustrated groups forming subterranean associations in the subculture of the civic public realm, not directly under the control of the state. Using familiar indigenous rituals as their intellectual resources, they seek to advance welfare within the civic public realm, enhancing their power holdings by employing tools and means from the primordial public that the state cannot control.

The premier example of this displacement effect is the spectacular record of the Reformed Ogboni Fraternity in colonial Nigeria. With the race barriers that prevented elite Nigerians from enjoying privileges that were open to Europeans in the capital city of Lagos in the 19402, a group of Western educated Nigerians, headed significantly by a Christian reverend gentleman, formed a secret cult named the *Reformed Ogboni Fraternity*. What was reformed about this association was its context for seeking power. In its traditional setting in ancient Oyo of the Yoruba in southwestern Nigeria, the Ogboni Cult was a council of influential ruling elites who exercised enormous power, sometimes in confrontation with the *Alafin* (king) of Oyo, in the affairs of the state. Its business was transacted in secrecy and it was believed to have been held together by strong rituals and bonds of oath, although in reality it was possible that there were strong elements of feudal aristocratic norms of noblesse oblige in their relationships (see Morton-Williams 1960). The Reformed Ogboni Fraternity of the 1940s took over the ritual conventions of the traditional Ogboni Cult but sought to increase its power holdings within the new civic public forum controlled by Europeans. Its success was remarkable, with its membership drawn from the most distinguished Nigerians of the time, and from the professions (including lawyers, police officers, judges,

businessmen, politicians, engineers, etc.). Membership was open to all ethnic groups right from its beginnings. Remarkably, the Ogboni Reformed Fraternity has survived to the present time, its branches having spread to other areas of Nigeria. Although oaths and bonds of secrecy have prevented its modus operandi from being understood by non-members, there is little doubt that power is its principal motto and protection of its members from harm one of its benefits. In modern Nigeria, the Reformed Ogboni Fraternity boasts membership from army generals, top police officers, bankers, etc. and it wields enormous powers among its members and for the, albeit from public view. But it exercises enormous influence on the activities of the state, often settling disputes among its members from different ethnic groups and shielding them from prosecution by the law.[11]

A more recent example of these displaced associations of civil society can be seen in the ongoing sour relations between Nigerian students and the Nigerian state. In the immediate post-independence era, students were a major source for influencing the direction of power in Nigerian politics and, to give one example, were largely responsible for the abrogation of a secret defense pact between Nigeria and Great Britain at the point of Nigerian independence. But with military rule, students' power has decreased significantly, while their behaviors have grown wilder, at a time when their standards in campus living have become miserable. Students' unions were constantly under harassment in the 1970s and 1980s, resulting in their inability to cater for the welfare of their membership as in previous times. Sociologically following in the footsteps of the Reformed Ogboni Fraternity, but obviously in a less refined manner, secret student organizations began to mushroom in the late 1980s -- with the most formidable of them all being the eiye. Again, they have relied on traditional rituals of oath-taking to bind members together in secrecy, while seeking to enhance the power of their members within the civic life of the campus. And again, remarkably, membership of these student secret associations is open to all Nigerians, even though their secret rituals of membership are drawn from particular primordial groupings.

Further examples of such displaced groups can be multiplied in the deviations from established Christian churches and mainstream Islam. Lack of openness to mass beliefs and attachment to dogma in both Christianity and orthodox Islam have led to religious formations that allow for the accommodation of indigenous rituals of worship and have occasionally resulted in bloody rebellions against established religions and state forces that back them up. They are emboldened by the profession of their deviant faith to criticize the state and its transgressions. But they increase access to associational life considerably, allowing especially individuals and groups at the margins of Islamic society to assert their own identity.[12]

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[11] Elements of the operations of the Mau Mau Cult that fought British colonial settlers in Kenya in the 1950s can be traced to this displacement effect. Unable to exercise any amount of power, Kenyan elite, particularly ex-service men who had fought in World War II for Britain, used traditional rituals of oath-taking to seek power in the modern colonial state of Kenya.

[12] Frederick Lugard's first difficulty after his rapid conquest of the Fulani empire in Northern Nigeria came in his encounter in 1906 with a challenge to his rule and that of the Fulani (who had quickly become his allies) from an Hausa Madhist [that is, a messianic] group operating in the outskirts of Sokoto. Thus, see M.G. Smith (1960: 205): "An event which tested Fulani loyalty to the British occurred in 1906, when [an Hausa] religious fanatic proclaimed himself Madhi at Satiru, a village near the capital of Sokoto. Lugard feared a widespread religious outbreak against the British. But the ruling Fulani supported the British attack on Saturi with calvary, although they had not been asked to do so. The British suffered the first reverse of their northern campaigns during their initial attack on Satiru; but

Are such associations properly to be regarded as constituting civil society? It is probably unnecessary to make such a claim on their behalf. What can be affirmed is that the persecution of civil society has as its unintended consequence the driving away of fractions of the persecuted associations of civil society to subterranean illicit activities and movements that seek to enhance their members' share of political power by employing irregular conduct within the political space of civic public domain. They certainly complicate the conception of civil society in Africa. They are able to breach the state's absolutism in several instances. In turn, state agencies and reformist regimes have sought to suppress these deviant civic associations -- so far without a great deal of success in Nigeria. As long as the state claims sole occupancy of the space of the civic public realm, these deviant associations will probably flourish.

Primordial Public Associations. One of the major developments from colonialism is the social formation of public spheres which served the public interests of unique primordial (usually ethnic) groupings in Africa, outside the civic public realm of the state. They constitute what I have labelled the primordial public realm (see Ekeh 1975). Although associated with ancient structures of kinship, these primordial publics are modern social formations whose goals are to enhance the collective welfare of unique primordial groupings in the modern circumstances of multiethnic and polyglot nation-states in Africa. As such, they are well beyond the private interests that do not extend into the affairs of others. Indeed, primordial publics in, say, Nigeria, may involve the public behaviors of several million persons, stretching to the collective finances of their associations as well as their paid staff. And they are not necessarily independent of the civic public realm. As a matter of fact, their success often depends on how well they are able to exploit the resources of the state-related civic public realm (see Ekeh: forthcoming, 1994).

Three examples from Nigeria will indicate how well primordial public associations have fared in achieving their goal of enriching their public primordial groupings from state resources. First, when the Ibo State Union was formed in the 1940s (see Coleman 1958; Sklar 1963; Wolpe 1974), one of its main aims was to enhance collective Ibo welfare from resources from the larger Nigerian public. In the preindependence period, former and serving officers of the Ibo State Union were prominent in governments of Eastern Nigeria and the federal center in Lagos. At that point, at least, its mission was to promote Ibo collective welfare with resources managed by both of these governments. Similarly, for our second example, the formation of the Egbe Omo Oduduwa[13] was intended to increase the Yoruba share of resources from the larger Nigerian public. Just as the officers of the Ibo State Union were prominent in the affairs of the N.C.N.C. (political party), so the Egbe Omo Oduduwa was closely tied to the affairs of the Action Group and of the Western Nigerian government which this political party controlled. In both of these cases, the supreme goal of their organizations, which became a measure of their success, was expressed in terms of how well the unique needs of their primordial publics were served from the pool of resources of the larger Nigerian civic public. It is noteworthy that the first

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the Fulani rulers remained loyal during the following month, while another force was gathered which put down the revolt. Besides its Madhist elements and aims, the Satiru incident was partly a revolt against the Sultan of Sokoto and partly against the British. Suppression of this revolt showed the Fulani that the British would support their rule; and it also showed the British that the Fulani would support theirs. Thus, the [Hausa] revolt at Satiru changed relations between the British and the ruling Fulani from superordination based on force to a near parity based on common interests."

[13] This means, literally from its Yoruba terms, "Association of Oduduwa's Children," Oduduwa being the mythical ancestor of the Yoruba.

military regime that seized power in 1966 banned both the Ibo State Union and the Egbe Omo Oduduwe on the grounds that they were unduly interfering with the affairs of the Nigerian state.

In comparison with the formidable political powers of the "Kaduna Mafia"[14] in modern Nigerian politics, the Ibo State Union and the Egbe Omo Oduduwa pale away into historical insignificance as instances of primordial pubic associations using the resources of the overall civic public realm as the means of achieving the goals and ends of promoting the collective welfare of the primordial groupings that they serve. The Kaduna Mafia is different, of course, from these earlier associations in that its activities are not open to public scrutiny and its membership can only be guessed. In terms of organizational style, the Kaduna Mafia's nearest parallel on the African continent is the Afrikaners' semi-secret Broederbond in South Africa. The Kaduna Mafia is an association of highly-placed Fulani-dominated Northern Nigerian elites whose supreme aim seems to be promoting and sustaining the awesome power holdings of the Fulani aristocracy by controlling the resources of the overall Nigerian civic public realm. There are many Nigerians who believe that the Kaduna Mafia dictates the terms of governance in Nigeria, by bending the state's operations to its own ends (see Takaya 1989-90; Takaya and Tyoden 1987).

The operations of this category of associations probably besmirch the meaning of civil society in Africa's public affairs. Should the semi-secret Kaduna Mafia of the Fulani in Nigeria and the Afrikaners' Broederbond in South Africa be ruled as existing outside the pale of civil society? Certainly, their membership is restricted and their intentions are directed at converting the resources of the wider state organization for the benefit of their narrower membership in their exclusive primordial public affairs. Even so, they contribute to the vitality of civil society by setting up a tradition of autonomy for associations operating in the public sphere and they help to restrain the state from becoming absolute.

Indigenous Development Associations. This category of voluntary associations covers a broad spectrum of organizations that seek to use their own resources, from an exclusive membership based on certain criteria of indigenous organizations, to secure their common welfare. They range from "esusu" groups (exchanging pooled resources that their participants contribute in specified time-periods among their members), farmers' unions, and market women organizations, to vast ethnic-wide associations. The historic archetype of these development associations is the Urhobo Progress Union in colonial Nigeria which served as the vehicle for lifting the Urhobo from what they considered to be their state of

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[14] The Kaduna Mafia is a term widely used in Nigeria to denote membership of a powerful semi-secret body of Northern Nigerian intellectuals, composed mostly of Fulani and those loyal to their cause of sustaining the predominance of an Islamic Northern Nigeria. Its name derives from their custom of meeting during weekends at Kaduna, the capital of Northern Nigeria from the period of British colonization. Although its membership and operations are shrouded in secrecy, most informed Nigerians believe that it is they who set the political agenda of all major events in Nigeria, making sure that the instruments of power remain in the hands of the Fulani aristocracy. The nearest parallel on the African continent to the Kaduna Mafia is the Afrikaner's Broederbond. Both organizations are not only semi-secret arms of ruling minority groups, they also share common commitments of sustaining the privileges of the status quo by subverting democratic practices.

backwardness relative to other reference groups.[15] A bolder and more modern example can be seen in post-Civil War Iboland which has virtually lifted itself from the disadvantages imposed by defeat in a destructive war largely through the intensive efforts of town development unions that have built bridges, water works, hospitals, etc. for the benefit of their communities.

Although these development associations have no immediate contacts with the state, their operations have been intimately related to the functioning of the state. Their importance grows with the failures of the state, as they are compelled to perform welfare functions for their membership. In addition, they have become politicized on several occasions, posing challenges to the survival of transgressing state elites. Thus, in Togo and scores of other African countries, market women's organizations have been critical in rousing the ire of their nations when the fruits of dictatorship have become unbearable.[16]

Civil Society as Democracy's Context

Ultimately, civil society is the only valid context for a functioning democracy. In a sense, democracy outside civil society's context is meaningless. As Giovanni Sartori (1991: 448) puts it, the liberalism of civil society is a sine qua non of democracy and "Non-liberal systems also are, by the same token, non-democratic." As the Cold War contest between conflicting claims to liberal democracy and one-party democracy yields room to a clearer definition of democracy, it becomes obvious that democracy is centered around the values of respect for the ordinary person. That is the essence of liberal democracy, its sole surviving meaning from the rumbles of the Cold War.[17]

The quest for unearthing the dynamics of civil society in Africa would be without purpose outside its potential relationship with such meaning of democracy. It is because liberal democracy has a weak base in Africa that civil society is being prompted as a possible method of reformulating Africa's democratic creed. This is in contrast with previous theories urging that strong states would supply Africa's political salvation. In the blush of post-independence expectations, modernization theory recommended, in the rounded logic of system analysis of the 1960s, that strong modern states in postcolonial Africa would readily breed a democratic order. In the event, the expected modernization of African states did not occur and many of them quickly degenerated into anti-democratic regimes, adopting and deepening the

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[15] The Urhobo Progress Union was formed in the mid-1930s, a full decade before the Ibo State Union. Its headquarters at Warri became, to all intents and purposes, the rallying grounds for Urhobo nationalism. The first two university graduates from Urhoboland were trained in England in the 1940s with little contributions from all adult Urhobo for the purpose of running a new Urhobo College, all under the auspices of the Urhobo Progress Union. In part, such efforts were undertaken because the Urhobo had little faith in the new colonial government which they saw as constantly favoring the neighbouring Itsekiri (see Ikime 1969). In the other part, the Itsekiri were the reference measure for the Urhobo in the 1930s and 1940s and there was general belief that if they were to catch up with their more advanced neighbors, it would have to be by way of collective efforts.

[16] Remarkably, recent Scandinavian aid to East and Central African nations have focused on this category of voluntary associations.

[17] I have made this claim despite further possible distinction between liberal democracy and social democracy. I am assuming that social democracy is only a refinement of liberal democracy's respect for the human person and his or her claim to special attention in the governance of the state.

manners of dictatorship left behind by European colonial rule. The new academic evangelization is to abandon attempts at developing African societies from above through the strengthening of African states. Rather, it is now being imagined that developing Africa from the underbrush of society will yield important results, at least for the expansion of democracy in Africa.

It is important to stake out this hidden agenda which is the motive force for the vast new attention on civil society in Africa. This is necessary because the hopes for democracy that would follow from the strengthening of civil society in Africa are premised on the experiences of Western history, just as in the 1960s modernization theory followed economic development. There is of course an important difference between modernization theory and the new focus on civil society with respect to the prospects for democracy. In the 1960s, the necessary institutions that would support democracy, such as national parliaments and other constructs of democracy, were deemed to be wanting and were to be built afresh in societies whose indigenous cultures lacked the political culture of democracy. In an important sense, the propositions of modernization theory were counterfactual in this sense, that the institutions on which it premised the foundations of its democratic order were non-existent, that is, they were still to be constructed. As we know from history, these efforts collapsed.

Contemporary considerations of civil society pose vastly different problems for the emergence of a democratic order in Africa from those of modernization theory. Africa has a vast array of institutions and associations of civil society, operating outside the presence and attention of the state. But it does follow that they will be useful for the rise of democracy. This is because civil society in Africa is largely indifferent to the affairs of the civic public realm over which the state presides. Civil society in Africa is content to look after the affairs of other segments of the public realm out of reach of the state or those about which the state shows little concern. This is a matter of grave importance and marks a dramatic difference between Western and Africa in the conception of civil society.

There are in the Western nations single consolidated public realms which effectively offer common platforms for the activities of the state and the public behaviors of individuals. This is not so in Africa. Here, on the contrary, there is segmentation of the public realm. There is a civic public realm over which the state presides and whose ownership it claims. The ordinary man (or woman) does not feel that he is part-owner of this realm. When he is wronged in it, he withdraws from it to his own primordial public realm whose ownership he asserts vigorously. By way of contrast, I have often been amazed at the vehemence with which an ordinary English housewife would scream that some corrupt public official "is wasting <u>our</u> money" – <u>her</u> money! She is so audacious because she takes a proprietary view of the public realm, and imagines herself a shareholder of its capital stocks. In most of Africa, historically, the civic public realm was seen as the property of the imperial European rulers.

Herein lies the problem for democracy in Africa, from the point of view of civil society. It is insufficient to argue that the mere presence and even further growth of civil society will help the development of democracy in Africa. What is needed is to search for ways that will enable the state and Africa's civil society to be mutually engaged in the public arena, lessening the claims of the state for total ownership of the political space of the civic public realm and encouraging the competence of the individuals and associations in civil society with respect to their appreciation of ownership of the public realm where they and the state function together. This points to a redefinition of the purpose and manners of the postcolonial state. In much of modern Africa, the state is still seen in its colonial robes as a <u>deus ex machina</u>, endowed from outside the nation by alien forces. The notion of ownership of the state or at least its area of operation becomes critical to a redefinition of the modern African state. This means that the state should not be abandoned; rather its purpose should be redefined and its operations strengthened.

Civil society may be of further use for our understanding of democracy in Africa in another direction. Democracy has two sides to its existence in any society. First, there are certain manifest institutions that characterize democracies, and that have flourished particularly well in the Western democracies. These include parliamentary assemblies, periodic elections, and multi-party systems that allow for credible opposition. But democracy does not survive simply because such institutions exist. Democracy endures also because it responds to certain local values and norms which enable its operators to accommodate local traditions. These norms of democracy are informed by the values of civil society. The genius for negotiations that is so valuable for consociational democracy in Belgium (see Lijphart 1969, 1977); the historic compromise that allows an unelected aristocratic House of Lords to function alongside a democratically elected House of Commons in making laws for Britain (see Turberville 1958, especially pages 396-428); and the rules that le the President and the Congress of the United States to work together although they do not belong to the same chambers: these are examples of norms of democracy that benefit from traditions of civil society. What sharpens the problem of democracy in Africa is that the norms that derive from the workings of civil society in the primordial public sphere have not benefitted the operations of democracy in any measurable way because there is a tendency to copy not just the institutions of democracy from the West but also, and rather incongruously, its norms of democracy. An exceptional case of a successful adaptation of democratic practices from the norms of civil society in Africa can be found in Botswana whose parliamentary democracy relies very much on its indigenous institution of kgotla in canvassing public opinion (see Molutsi and Holm 1990).[18]

Conclusions: Constitutions and Other Institutions of Civil Society in Africa

There is a certain amount of rigidity, bordering on social indifference and mass cynicism, in the ways African societies have used institutions and structures which European imperialism bequeathed to postcolonial African nations. This is particularly the case with those structures of democracy and constitutionalism that colonialism ironically devised in haste in the brief era of decolonization, running counter to the dictatorial strain of colonial governance. African states, and individuals and groups living in functioning in them, have paid scant attention to both the spirit and letter of the constitutional documents that brought them nationhood. This is in part because they were written as formal and distant documents to which few were committed. The consequence has been laci of constitutional legality in most of Africa's nations. And yet civil society requires the predictability of constitutional law and the restraints that constitutions impose on governments that operate them in order to secure the respect for the human person without which civil society is an empty phrase. A living constitution provides a worthy platform for engaging the state and civil society.

Genuine constitutions are problem-solvers. They make sense when their nations of reference have manifold problems of governance that require conventions of citizens to solve. In the African experience -- with the possible exception of Zimbabwe (that is, the former settle colony of Rhodesia) and of the ongoing programs of negotiations in South Africa -- African constitutions have not been used to solve major problems. There have been various attempts in, say, Nigeria and Ghana, to build fresh constitutions but they have hardly moved beyond the flawed patterns of the past in which constitutions

[18] Molutsi and Holm's paper is rich with facts many of which would seem to challenge their conclusion that democracy works in Botswana in spite of a weak civil society. I fear that their conclusion was reached because they tried so hard to see one-to-one parallels between civil society in the West and in Botswana. My view of their evidence is that civil society is ample in Botswana. Moreover, it is engaged with the state.

were imposed by either colonial rulers or military dictators. Nor have the much-praised National Conference of French-speaking African nations provided a valid answer to the question of the low salience of constitutions in the governance of African states. A major attention, possibly instigated from international platforms involving African participation, may point to Africans, and to the international community and agencies involved in the governance problems of Africa, the supreme value of enforceable constitutions in resolving many of Africa's political problems.

Constitutions as Republic Conventions. The making of constitutions has been an undertaking from which the average citizen has largely been left out in Africa. There have been occasional consultations with representatives of ordinary persons, even involving elections to constituent assemblies in rare cases -- as were those of the 1979 Constitutions in Nigeria and Ghana. But in these, as in most other constitutions in Africa, the final authority for accepting any clauses into the relevant constitutions were military dictators, who have often cited the precedents of colonial rulers' over-riding roles in the making of previous constitutions. I know of no cases in which constitutions have had to be ratified in popular elections or by the parliaments of elected deputies. Accordingly, postcolonial constitutions in Africa have been made for the people, not by them. This notion that the constitution is an imposition of relevant authority has been the basis for the frequent annulment and suspension of constitutions in periods of military putsches.

Building up traditions of civil society requires that constitutions become documents that ordinary persons can identify with and that are usable in their everyday life. Such republican attributes of constitutions may save them from being annulled by military dictators. It is remarkable that no military dictator has yet dared any important traditional ruler in, say, Nigeria since they would be challenging an institution that the people believe they own.[19] It is such sense of identity with constitutions that a republican approach to constitution-building should aim for in any campaign for civil society in Africa. It may also involve the making of documents of governance that are usable at the local government level as well as the state or regional levels.

Republican constructions of constitutions should also include their demystification. Very often, constitutions in Africa have not been available in departments of history and political science which incorporate them into university curriculum. I know that constitutions were not taught in Nigerian or Ghanaian universities both of which were well regarded as systems of education in Africa. The incorporation of constitutions into the academic structures of universities stretching to secondary school may help to implant regard and respect for constitutions in Africa's political cultures.

Constitutions as Social Contract. The notion that a constitution can be seen as a contract is not far away from everyday conduct of market women who transact business and give credit on contract basis. Nor is it far removed from the history of the Asante Confederation which was formed as a way of solving perennial problems of warfare in precolonial Ghana (see Wilks; Davidson). However, it requires rethinking the purpose of the postcolonial state. For many Africans, the state belongs to foreign agencies, outside of their control. If the government does things for them they are regarded as gifts given out of generosity by state elites. If they do not receive any benefits, it is because they are wicked and ungenerous. On the other had, the notion that they have a duty to perform to sustain the postcolonial

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[19] Actually, the Nigerian dictator Ibrahim Babagida's regime did dare the Oba of Benin on one occasion. But it quickly backed away when severe reactions from Binis made it clear that tampering with the king's liberties was unacceptable to his people.

state has not been accepted. The propagation of the notion that the state should operate on the basis of contract and that as citizens Africans have duties to contribute to the common welfare of the state may sound elementary enough but has not been well grounded in Africa's political history.

As a group, traditional rulers in Ghana have successfully insisted on several occasions that even Ghana's military governments must not violate their constitutional contracts with the state (see Ghana 1979: Chapter 19 referring to Chieftaincies' rights and duties).[20] A national constitution can become a powerful instrument of building up civil society and democracy if other groups contribute to statements of rights and duties in its document. Trade unions, market women, farmers' unions and student unions will all benefit by seeking protection within the constitution. This will also diversify the reach of African constitutions, moving away from exclusive attention to interethnic relationships.[21]

Military and Police Functions in African Constitutions. Perhaps the greatest threat to civil society in Africa is the overbearing presence of the military forces in the running of African states. This is the case because military rulers have largely exempted themselves from civilian laws which they do violate consistently. In Nigeria and Ghana, especially civilian spokesmen who have contributed to the drafting of their 1979 constitutions, suggested that military coup d'etats should be made constitutionally illegal but military rulers who had final authority on what were to be included in these constitutions deleted all such clauses. An international convention siding with civilians' point of view on these matters would be of great moment for constitutional development in Africa. What is needed is an international convention encouraging nations to make constitutions barring internal military coups d'etats and enabling such constitutions to include clauses that will empower international bodies and agencies to take specified actions if national constitutions are violated by those who force nations to do their will by force of arms. Such international delegitimation of the military will clearly enhance the prospects of civilian engagement with the governance of African nations.

One ugly consequence of the military presence and of personal and one-party dictatorships in Africa is that the police forces have been alienated from the populace in virtually every African country. The police have come to be perceived as those brutal agencies that do dictator's will. The traditional significance of the police is that it serves as the viable link between the state and civil society. Rebuilding the police establishments in African nations and redefining their role would be critical to rewarding the relationships between the state and civil society in Africa. Everywhere, the centralizing tendencies of dictatorships have affected the conduct of national police. National constitutions should address the serious problem of whether some arms of the police should be localized, bringing them closer to the populace that they serve.

Constitutions and the Problem of National Sovereignty. Such viewpoints on the role of the military in national governments and such suggestions referring to the international banning of coup d'etats raise

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[20] I gained this bit of information from Mr. Michael Appiah, Secretary of the Western Region of Ghana in the 1982-3 period, who is now resident in Buffalo. The behavior of Ghana's traditional rulers in interpreting the constitution as a contract is probably unique in Africa and possibly inherits from the tradition of constitution-making that is associated with Golden history in Akan history and mythology (Davidson 1992: 53-62).

[21] The Nigerian Constitution of 1979 was solely focused on the relationship between the state and ethnic groups and the individual's dual relationship with them (see Ekeh and Osaghae 1979).

serious questions about the issues of national sovereignty. They definitely would affect Africa's notions of national sovereignty in two ways. First, it would make national constitutions mandatory documents for whose enforcement the nations of Africa may seek the help of international bodies. A new sensitivity to the relevance of constitutions as a nation's supreme law would have to be implanted into African political cultures at the international level. Secondly, it has been widely assumed in Africa that a nation's sovereignty can only be attacked from outside its borders. But Africa's circumstances imply that it can also be assailed from within by those who unfairly enjoy the monopoly of the implements of violence. Coups d'etats are affronts on national sovereignty against which nations may wish to protect themselves well ahead of their occurrence.

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The Universe of Civil Society:
The Heterogeneity of Associations in Africa

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"Civil society" is often described as engaging the state yet simultaneously maintaining distinct autonomy from the state. One of the main reasons for the renewed interest in civil society among scholars, donors and others is because of the understanding that democratization requires a strong civil society through which people can freely associate, aid in the construction of democratic and participatory institutions, and can hold government accountable. Yet "civil society" is a theoretical concept which means there are some inherent difficulties in trying to employ it as an empirical concept.[1] In order to discuss the diversity of institutions within civil society, I will focus on the issue of autonomy as one bridge that could allow us to keep the concept in analytical focus, while providing empirical examples to demonstrate the various expressions of autonomy from the state.

Civil society is frequently perceived as including the media, interest groups, trade unions, churches, professional associations and many other such institutions. Part of the problem in identifying institutions within civil society is the necessity of determining to what extent these organizations are capable of providing autonomous arenas for participation. In other words, one cannot a priori decide that, for example, all trade unions are part of civil society simply because they are trade unions. One would need to know the extent to which a particular trade union is autonomous from the state and how representative it is of the interests of its constituency.

Many associations that one might consider to be part of civil society, like non-governmental organizations (NGOs), might promote autonomy along some dimensions but not others, i.e., their role is highly context specific. NGOs may have clearly defined goals and be open to new membership, but at the same time non-participatory in their internal structure, arbitrary in their decision making and tied to patronage links of government. We find, for example, in Africa some agricultural cooperatives regaining autonomy from the state as in Tanzania, while other farmer unions are becoming more closely tied to the state, e.g., Zimbabwe.[2] Similarly, small and informal women's groups in Uganda may be participatory, multiethnic, multireligious, operating with clearly defined rules embodied in a constitution. Yet because they are fiercely autonomous of the state and do not engage it, they might fall outside of some commonly accepted taxonomies of civil society.

Other institutions carry out functions which simultaneously support local popular empowerment, while their broader purpose undermines possibilities for democratization. Welfare provision associations that are tied to the Islamic fundamentalist movement in countries like Egypt, Tunisia and Algeria are examples

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[1] Bratton, Michael, forthcoming.

[2] Bratton, Michael, "Micro-Democracy? The Merger of Farmer Unions in Zimbabwe," African Studies Review, 37 (1 1994).

of such phenomena. One of the reasons that groups within these movements have gained so much popular support is the fact that they have delivered services where the state was unable to do so. They have provided educational, health and charitable services with mosques at the center of their activities, while simultaneously being part of a movement that advocates an Islamic state. Participants in these movements are involved in and support institutions which provide social services, but they also support an Islamic vision which is at odds with a view of governance that separates religion and state. And so it is important to differentiate between the various ways in which institutions promote or do not promote democratic norms and to consider how strong their commitment is to these institutions.

The *harambee* movement in Kenya is yet another example of the same kind of contradictory function within one institution. *Harambee* involves large numbers of rural dwellers to meet locally identified needs through the provision of educational, health, water and other services. The community members finance, initiate and implement most of their self-help projects with some outside assistance.[3] Nevertheless, the groups often fall under the manipulations of local elites, politicians and administrative officials, who try to use the *harambee* movement to one degree or another to engage in patronage-based political competition, according to Kanyinga.[4]

The Importance of Autonomy from the State

Organizational autonomy is important because it has the potential to allow associations to define their own goals and agendas to freely select their own leaders. It may permit greater participation because people associate in ways that are meaningful to their lives and circumstances. Autonomy allows for the possibility to mobilize free of patronage obligations and does not tie people's activities to the political ambitions by giving people fora from which to complement, challenge, and hold government accountable.

This paper focuses on the issue of autonomy from the state as one dimension along which to evaluate civil society, not because it is the only dimension, but because it is one of the more critical dimensions since state-society relations in post-independent Africa have been defined so frequently by state attempts to coopt, incorporate and control societal associations. Cooperatives, trade unions, youth organizations, women's umbrella organizations, journalists' associations and business associations, have all too often been brought into corporate arrangements orchestrated by the state.

These days many organizations are in a process of disentangling themselves from the state and creating an independent legitimacy of their own. Other new organizations have emerged outside of the state's sphere. Many of these remain small, informal and invisible primarily to maintain cohesion, effectiveness and to evade control of the state or any other outside interests. In some cases, independent social welfare and other associations have become especially important where state resources have been limited. Some associations gain their legitimacy from the very fact that they exist outside of the spheres of state patronage, others because they are able to maintain transparency in culturally appropriate forms. Various organizations express their autonomy by defending societal interests against the encroachments of the

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[3] Barkan, Joel D. and Frank Holmquist, "Peasant-State Relations and the Social Base of Self-Help in Kenya," World Politics 41 (3 1989).

[4] Kanyinga, Karuti, "NGOs in Kenya," in Peter Gibbon, ed., Social Change and Economic Reform in Africa. Uppsala: The Scandinavian Institute of African Studies, 1993.

state, others through opposition or challenges to the state. These processes and manifestations of autonomy are among the most dynamic changes one sees in Africa today.

Because the situation is very much one of flux, the extent of autonomy among associations that were tied to state or the ruling party is variable. At the same time, those associations which have emerged outside of the state, in spite of it or in opposition to it, assert their autonomy in various ways depending on the context. Moreover, it is important to distinguish between local and national organizations and the different ways in which they engage the state. Local level groups are more likely to be involved in local political struggles over access to resources and less likely to involve themselves in national level debates over human rights, constitutional reform, land laws, etc., which are more likely to be taken up by urban associations of professionals and activists.

What follows is an attempt to examine the many expressions and uses of autonomy and thereby explore the diversity of associational life in Africa.

Associations Disentangling from the State

Associational autonomy has been created at times by transforming associations that once were controlled by the regime in a corporatist-like arrangement, often of a one party state. In Benin, for example, the regime had attempted to control all business and market sellers, according to Heilbrunn. Merchants selling cloth, liquor and food in urban centers and villages all belonged to one organization. Military commander Major Kérékou formed the Union Nationale des Commerçantes Béninoises (UNCOBE) in 1976, hoping to bring all market women under the government's control. But the women purposefully kept their activities locally based and outside of state regulation, channeling much of their business into the informal economy, especially into the trade with Nigeria. Others evaded outside control by forming associations with associations. For instance, market leaders of the association oversaw market vendors who, in turn, presided over rotating savings and credit associations called *tontine* embedded inconspicuously within the UNCOBE structure. UNCOBE eventually withdrew its support from the regime after the banks crashed in 1989 and continued to press demands for freedom of association, political pluralism and a free trade zone.[5]

Other institutions delinked themselves more openly from the state, taking advantage of the momentum arising around pressures for multipartyism. For example, cooperatives in Tanzania had been a critical force in the nationalist movement, but after independence, they gradually came under the control of the ruling party and government. The Cooperative Societies Act of 1968, for example, gave the Registrar of Cooperatives powers to remove cooperative leaders and the government strengthened the authority of the marketing boards. Their opposition to the widely unpopular villagization program of the government made them all the more vulnerable to government encroachments. The 1974 Villages and Ujamaa Villages Act made villages into multipurpose cooperative societies. The government announced the dissolution of the producer cooperatives, liquidation of their assets, which were passed on to the crop marketing authorities. The dissolution of cooperatives was eventually recognized as a mistake and in 1982, a new Cooperatives Act allowed cooperatives unions to reregister. Nevertheless, the ruling party (*Chama Cha Mapinduzi*) and the government continued to dominate the cooperative union since the cooperatives remained a party mass organization along with the trade unions, the national youth

[5] Heilbrunn, John. "Social Origins of National Conferences in Benin and Togo." *Journal of Modern African Studies* 1993.

organization, the Women's Union and the Parent's Association. When the ruling party began to delink itself from government (the Political Parties Act of 1992 made the separation official) that cooperatives found it a propitious time to establish their independence more fully. With the Cooperative Societies Act of 1991, cooperatives regained their autonomy from the party and the process of delinking from the party remains an ongoing one, as the unions struggle to restore the confidence of cooperative members and pay off debts inherited from the period of government control.

In contrast to this gradual withdrawal from being a state-led institution into a more independent one, other organizations formed to fill gaps not met by the state.

Filling in the Gaps where State Resources are Limited

Other organizations have emerged to fulfill societal needs for income, social and welfare services where the state has failed them. Therefore, in some contexts they have little use for engaging the state, which does not have much to offer in the way of resources. Many of these associations have emerged directly as a response to economic crisis and stagnation. For example, in my study of urban women's associations in Uganda,[6] I found that the majority of women surveyed who belonged to organizations were involved in income-generating, cultural, religious, credit and savings, welfare (for orphans, etc.) and farming groups. Most of the groups were multipurpose in nature involving a variety of functions, usually combining their various activities with self-help initiatives, e.g., building schools, clinics, roads, wells, and assisting rural women's groups. Most came into existence in the last five years, taking advantage of the peace brought about by the takeover of the National Resistance Movement in 1986, but they also formed in response to the economic crisis. In fact, women regarded the main successes of their associations as the provision of tangible benefits to members in the form of income, services, education, the development of their area and the provision of assistance to the needy. Most groups were not registered with any national association or state agency. Their membership was generally between 20-30 members. The groups raised funds primarily through collecting dues from members, selling products, performing at cultural events, and digging in other peoples fields with little outside assistance. One third of the groups received outside funding in Luwero, one quarter in Kampala and Kabale, while Mbale groups received virtually nothing. The groups that received the most outside funding were religious associations, who received assistance form their national church body. For the most part, these associations are self-sufficient and operate in a way that makes their need to interact with the state unnecessary.

Another example of groups that have taken over public service provision from the state might include urban youth associations in Dakar and Kampala, which became frustrated with the lack of government public services and began to take matters into their own hands. Dakar young people who were part of a "Clean, Make Clean" movement formed groups to collect garbage, clean and paint buildings, shaming community leaders and public officials into making their own improvements in the city.[7] A similar association of youth in Kampala started on a voluntary basis cleaning public toilets, market places and

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[6] My study included a cluster/stratified survey of 1,142 randomly selected citizens (80% women) in the urban centers of Kampala, Mbale, Kabale and Luwero concerning their political and associational participation.

[7] Landell-Mills, Pierre. "Governance, Cultural Change and Empowerment," *Journal of Modern African Studies* 30 (4 1992): 558.

painting pedestrian crossings near schools, similarly challenging the city authorities to do more in the provision of basic services. Where state resources are available, these same voluntary associations may seek support while attempting to maintain autonomy. It is important to keep in mind that autonomy or dependence are not absolutes and need to be seen in degrees and as variable even within an institution.

Hometown development associations are examples of associations that may cooperate with local government, while maintaining the same associational autonomy. Like the local women's groups in Uganda and the urban youth groups in Kampala and Dakar, hometown associations have also taken over many of the functions of the state to provide local public services and have even been described in some contexts as "shadow states." Studies in eastern Yorubaland and Western Nigeria describe hometown voluntary associations which existed since the colonial era but have gained in importance in the 1980s. They build schools, medical facilities, install electricity, water pipelines and telephone facilities, even providing infrastructure for postal services.[8] Membership is open to members of the community who participate in meetings and planning. The associations tax members to finance projects, ensuring compliance through social pressure and in some areas they have become the apex organization for all the communities' associational activities. They play an intermediary role mediating between local and national interests and enjoy a high level of legitimacy among the communities they operate in.

In Tanzania, the development associations emerged in the late 1980s as a revival of older ethnic unions, which were banned at independence in an effort to undercut ethnic bases of political action. Today they operate from the level of districts down to local village. As in Nigeria, they have assumed many of the former functions of government and have even improved on many of the public services provided by government. At the present, they cooperate with local government, complement their activities and push local governments to take various action. But this congenial relationship may not continue as they increase in strength since they gradually are replacing the functions of local government, e.g., taxing coffee and cotton growers, building schools, roads, hospitals, wells.

Staying Small and Invisible to Remain Autonomous

Some associations attempt to remain inconspicuous because they do not want to draw attention of the state or to be controlled by the state or any other outside agency. For these reasons, they attempt to maintain their associational independence. In my 1992-1993 study of urban women's associations in Uganda, I found women who fiercely defended the independence of their associations and often purposefully kept them small, informal, invisible and unregistered to make sure that they did not lose control of them to an outside regulatory or governmental authority. Imam and Jibrin have argued that autonomy for civil society implies that citizens should be able to lead their lives free of excessive restrictions from the state and even from other powerful forces in non-dominant institutions.[9] As one woman in a small informal self-help association in Kampala, Uganda, put it:

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[8] Barkan, Joel D., Michael L. McNulty and M.A.O. Ayeni, "'Hometown' Voluntary Associations, Local Development and the Emergence of Civil Society in Western Nigeria"; Lillian Trager, "Structural Adjustment and Local Development in Nigeria," in Economic Analysis Beyond the Local System, forthcoming.

[9] Imam, A. and Jibrin Ibrahim, "Democratization Process in Africa," *CODESRIA Bulletin* No. 2, page 5, 1991.

These organizations will collapse if they become formalized. We work so well informally. We have no office. Everything is nice and simple. The minute we become formal we will collapse. The minute we try to get credit, we will go to shambles. The group is based on trust, mutual confidence, flexibility. You do what you want, the organization is yours.

Providing Legitimacy through Culturally Relevant Forms of Association

Some associations offer more legitimate sources of authority than state institutions because they embody culturally relevant ways of ensuring accountability. They may not fit classic liberal patterns of promoting transparency within institutions, but they are successful precisely because they are culturally appropriate.

One good example of this is the revival of the dual sex governance structure in Igbo as well as other West African societies. A dual sex political system is one in which representatives of each gender governs their own members through a Council. In much of former Eastern Nigeria, most communities have a broad based Women's Governing Council that has sole jurisdiction over wide ranging political, economic and cultural affairs of women, from market issues, to relations with men, and to morality.[10] These organizations, according to Nzegwu, are autonomous of the state, yet their decisions are binding regardless of social status, education or income level. Moreover, the local councils can represent women living as far as Lagos, Kano or New York. They are distinct from organizations modeled along Western patterns, they promote a sense of "shared communitarian values rather than perceived divisive individualistic values," as Nzegwu puts it. Their leaders service a wide range of associations and therefore are multifaceted in their approach, since they are concerned with social, cultural, religious, economic and political issues simultaneously, giving them a virtual "encyclopedic knowledge of their community."

Nzegwu argues that these women's councils are enormously important to local women because they have a strong community orientation and claim to legitimacy. Their diverse membership means that the council can draw on a wide variety of skills and know how for advice. Accountability is maintained by a strict monitoring system where nothing is hidden and the threat of public humiliation and ostracism weights heavily as deterrent to violations of council norms. Accountability is tied to community validation, which is an extremely effective constraint on corruption in this context. The complex and efficient administrative structures that can also adapt to new situations speaks to the resiliency of these associations.

[10] Nzegwu, Nkiru, "Recovering Igbo Traditions: A Case for Indigenous Women's Organizations in Development," unpublished paper.

Gaining Legitimacy through Autonomy from the State

Yet other organizations, like peasant associations in Senegal,[11] entrepreneurs in Zaire,[12] and many women's groups in Uganda,[13] have emerged outside patronage systems tied to the state. They have created new norms of association that are distinct from the patterns of participation associated with state-led institutions. Their autonomy from the state is, in fact, the basis for their own legitimacy. This is not to say that these highly autonomous associations do not engage the state in specific contexts, but that they are not defined by their relation to the state.

In Senegal, there are 200,000 members of Federation of Senegalese Non-Government Organizations (FONGS) founded in 1978. FONGS is an umbrella national organization of 23 farmers associations and one urban association that has attempted a strategy of autonomization as a means to establishing a legitimacy and out of a concern that their resources and structures might be claimed by the state, which continues to reduce services and inputs. The new leaders do not belong to long-established patronage networks and as a result they have forced negotiations with the state to become more transparent even if they cannot affect change in real producer prices. Negotiations with rural extension centers, for example, have succeeded in becoming more open regarding services and other matters and peasants no longer pay illegal unofficial fees which in the past had resulted in arbitrary interactions between peasants and state and a lack of trust. Other important changes included the increased opportunities for participation and leadership of women, along with the emphasis on consensual and democratic structures, the insistence of self-help procedures, networking among the various peasant groups and the provision of a forum for people to come together and discuss their common concerns.[14]

Defenses Against State Predation

The extent of associational engagement of the state through policy advocacy is not only contingent on the internal capacity and objectives of organizations, but also on the state's ow responses to civil society. Some engage the state mainly to defend themselves from its predation. Just to take one brief example, journalists' associations in both Tanzania (in 1993) and Uganda (in 1992) were forced to mobilize to reject proposed bills that would have curtailed the freedom of the press.

Autonomy as a Challenge to the State

In other related circumstances associations consolidate in opposition to the state, as has been evident in public demonstrations against the consequences of structural adjustment or human rights violations, and

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[11] Lachenmann, Gudrun, "Civil Society and Social Movements in Africa: The Case of the Peasant Movement in Senegal," *The European Journal of Development Research* 5 (2 1993): 68-100.

[12] MacGaffey, Janet. Entrepreneurs and Parasites: The Struggle for Indigenous Capitalism in Zaire. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987.

[13] Tripp, Aili Mari, "Gender, Political Participation and the Transformation of Associational Life in Uganda and Tanzania," *African Studies Review* 37 (1 1994).

[14] Lachenmann, ibid.

in exerting pressure for political reform.[15] These demonstrations have involved organizations of workers, students, women, church bodies, and many others:

- Urban women's associations in many parts of Africa are only one of many forces that have been active in protests of human rights abuses. For example, in 1992 in Uhuru Park at the center of Nairobi, Kenya, women stripped naked and leveled the most vehement curses on police when they attacked their hunger strike in support of political prisoners.

- Similarly, in Mauritania, police beat women protesters, injuring 40, in a human rights demonstration in August 1991. Over 150 women had staged a sit-down strike outside a paramilitary police base in Nouakchott demanding an independent inquiry into the disappearance of hundreds of Hal-Pulaar black Mauritanians who disappeared after being arrested following an alleged coup attempt in 1990. Amnesty International reported that as many as 339 political prisoners were killed by Mauritanian authorities between November 1990 and March 1991.

- In Conakry, Guinea, workers went on general strike, students demonstrated and women's groups organized a sit-in in front of the presidential palace to protest the economic crisis which they blamed on the country's leadership.[16]

- In Benin, school teachers were influential in bringing about a régime change in 1989/90.[17]

- Students have been active from Gabon to Côte d'Ivoire, Zimbabwe and Kenya in protesting issues ranging from poor study and economic conditions to raising political demands around corruption.[18]

- The Zambia Congress of Trade Unions, led by Frederick Chiluba, first called for a referendum on the one-party system and eventually was the critical force behind the movement towards multi-party politics in Zambia.

- In countries like Kenya and Cameroon, just to name two, lawyers and their associations were at the center of the movements pushing for multiparty reform.

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[15] Bayart, Francois. "Civil Society in Africa," in Patrick Chabal ed. Political Domination in Africa: Reflections on the Limits of Power. London: Cambridge University Press, 1986.

[16] Personal communication, Soriba Sylla, 1991.

[17] Landell-Mills, ibid., p. 562.

[18] Bratton, Michael and Nicolas van de Wall, "Popular Protest and Political Reform in Africa," *Comparative Politics* 24 (4 1992): 422.

In Kenya, for example, in the course of the struggle for political pluralism, the churches, and in particular, the National Council of Churches of Kenya (NCCK), became especially critical as the state increasingly eliminated opposition to government. One of the reasons the churches became one of the key institutions in which people sought refuge in their opposition to the government was the fact that historically the churches had consistently maintained autonomy from the state, especially throughout the 1980s. As the crisis deepened and state resources dwindled, people came to rely more on church assistance in social service provision, thus enhancing the legitimacy of the church and giving them a social base whose interests they sought to represent.[19]

Various associations lobby for particular policy changes or for access to resources for their constituencies. These generally tend to be intermediary organizations in the form of community development associations, associations based on specific interests, like cooperatives, religious groups, environmental groups, women's groups, and other associations that serve as umbrella organizations representing a large number of local grassroots chapters or associations. Although this aspect of associational activity is weak, one can find examples of organizations that engage in political advocacy.

The Confederation of Zimbabwean Industries (CZI) lobbied effectively for an economic reform program that would help the manufacturing sector's position in competing against imports and redirecting itself to export markets. In particular, CZI lobbied for a planned, selective and gradual approach to trade liberalization in conjunction with the imposition of tariffs. While collaborating with the Commercial Farmers' Union and the mining sector on joint approaches to government after 1988, the CZI was the focus of lobbying efforts because it was most strongly affected by the 1990 Economic Structural Adjustment Programme. The manufacturing sector also contributed more to the GDP than any other sector.[20]

Local associations may not individually have much impact at the national level, but coalitions of groups or umbrella groups can come together at the national or regional levels to articulate a common agenda or common concerns. Examples of such mobilization include various district, national and international networks of women's associations in East Africa that were formed primarily in the 1990s. These organizations have come together to devise agendas regarding women in politics, reform of laws affecting women, reproductive health, environmental concerns, and a variety of issues that affect the status of women. The Tanzania Gender Networking Programme (TGNP) is one such national organization that has brought together dozens of women's groups from professional ones (lawyers, medical practitioners) to artists women's groups, women's rights activists (e.g., Tanzania Media Women's Association), and women's church organizations to devise joint strategies to promote gender equality through legal aid, legal reform, supporting women politicians, education, social services, macro-economic policy, health and nutrition, reproduction, and HIV/AIDS and strategies for networking. TGNP explicitly sought to "encourage the expansion of space in civil society for groups and organizations of all kinds, free of top-

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[19] Ngunyi, Mutahi G. and Kamau Gathiaka, "State-Civil Institutions Relations in Kenya in the 1980s," in Peter Gibbon, ed. Social Change and Economic Reform in Africa. Uppsala: The Scandinavian Institute of African Studies, 1993. See also Karuti Kanyinga, "NGOs in Kenya," in Peter Gibbon, ed., Social Change and Economic Reform in Africa. Uppsala: The Scandinavian Institute of African Studies, 1993.

[20] Skalnes, Tor, "The State, Interest Groups and Structural Adjustment in Zimbabwe," *The Journal of Development Studies* 29 (3 1993): 401-428.

down state control; prioritize networking and solidarity, so as to strengthen coalitions among groups and organizations, whereby pressure groups can lobby for policy reform and action at all levels."[21]

At the regional level in East Africa, networks like the 1993 East African Conference of Women facilitated networking among women's groups in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda in preparation for the 1995 United Nations Women's Conference in Beijing. Over 120 leaders of women's organizations in the three countries met to develop common and country-specific strategies and agendas for women's mobilization, placing the issue of women's access to public leadership as the top priority concern.

While recognizing the weakness of policy advocacy within associational life in Africa today, it is necessary to also point out that this is not only due to the internal weakness of associations. In many contexts, the state simply is not capable of responding to societal pressure. It may not have the will or the capacity to make appropriate policy changes or implement them in response to challenges from civil society. In less benign situations, the state itself may be a source of repression in which it would make little sense for associations to attempt to influence policy.

In conclusion, what is interesting about civil society is not the categories or slots we come up with that we can throw different groups into, but rather, which actors under various circumstances are making a difference as a result of the autonomy they have claimed by changing norms and institutions, changing governance structures, and restructuring the ways in which state and society interact.

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[21] Tanzania Gender Networking Programme. Gender Profile of Tanzania. Tanzania Gender Networking Programme, Dar es Salaam, 1993, page 114; Aili Mari Tripp, "Urban Women's Movements and Political Liberalization in East Africa," in K. Sheldon, ed., Women in Urban Africa. Westview Press, forthcoming.

CIVIL SOCIETY, DEMOCRACY AND DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA

SESSION II:

NGOS AS INSTRUMENTS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND DEMOCRACY: METHODS AND ISSUES

Ms. Marren Akatsa-Bukachi, YWCA, Nairobi, Kenya: "Democracy and Development"

Ms. Emelia Adjepong, FIDA, Accra, Ghana: "Women, Law and Democracy"

Hosted by the U.S. Agency for International Development

June 9-10, 1994
Washington, D.C.

Civil Society, Democracy and Development in Africa

Paper Presented at a Workshop Held
from June 9 and 10, 1994 at the
Carnegie Endowment for International Peace
Washington, D.C.

by Marren Akatsa-Bukachi
National Programme Secretary
Y.W.C.A. of Kenya

Introduction

The YWCA of Kenya is a voluntary organization in which work and planning are shared by volunteers and staff members working as a team and complimenting each other.

Since its inception in 1912, the YWCA has had as its major goal the responsible participation of women in all aspects of life.

This has been pursued in various ways amongst them:

- providing services to which women normally have limited access;
- identifying practices which discriminate against women and advocating against them with informed voices;
- sharing resources through a world-wide network within the country at the local level, and outside the YWCA, regionally and internationally.

In aiming to empower women, the YWCA of Kenya has been running a training programme on women's leadership for over 9 years and has through it trained over 8,000 women and youth to be leaders in their communities.

With these skills some of these women sit on development committees at local, divisional and district level; and speak out on issues on behalf of their communities.

It is noteworthy, that unless their leadership is effective at the community level, real change in the status of women cannot be achieved. Thus, self-confidence, which opens up new horizons for women, is built on personal achievements.

Apart from empowering women to make decisions, the YWCA of Kenya is involved in rural development activities that alleviate the burden of women such as construction of community water and sanitation projects, provision and accessing of credit facilities, and business management training for income generation.

These services and programs impact on the individual and community as they serve to improve the social-economic status of the particular populace.

YWCA's Involvement in the Democratization Process

Background

In December 1991, the Kenyan Parliament repealed Section 2A of the Constitution and paved the way for a multi-party political system which, in turn, opened the floodgates for different parties and pressure groups.

Women in Kenya, more than at any other time since independence, came out very strongly demanding that their voices be heard and their gender based interests be recognized and mainstreamed in the new democratic agenda. Further to that, they wanted to participate on equal footing with men.

Women in Kenya form 52 percent of the population, perform two-thirds of the agricultural and development work, and form the majority of the voting population. As part of the traditional rural society where cultural norms are still strongly observed, the way women and men are socialized is characterized by a dichotomy which gives rise to ambiguity and confusion. Women are therefore still responsible for extremely time consuming family chores in addition to their farming activities. As a consequence, women have little time for activities leading to the improvement of their lives particularly in the socio-political arena. This is coupled with a high illiteracy rate and lack of confidence in women. Against this backdrop, women's participation and representation in parliament and other political arenas has been quite negligible.

YWCA's Response

The YWCA of Kenya together with concerned women's organizations became involved in a National Women's Convention which was organized by the "National Council of Women of Kenya" in February 1992. It brought together 3,000 women from all walks of life to map out strategies for women's participation in the democratization process.

The Convention came up with a number of resolutions, paramount of which was that "awareness programs be set up to sensitize and conscientiousize women, especially those at the grassroot level, to understand their rights as citizens, and the political choices available to them in the multi-party democratization set-up." It was also resolved that women voters be sensitized about the power of their vote and of the need to vote in gender sensitive leaders who would not relegate women's issues to a lower status. Women were encouraged to vie for Civic and Parliamentary seats in order to achieve a platform from which to vie for their own needs.

YWCA was concerned at the poor participation of women in parliament which stood at two elected women members and one nominated member of the then Parliament out of a total of 188 members. Statistics show that the first woman was elected into Parliament in 1969, nearly 10 years after independence. The 1970's and early 1980's saw more women stepping into Parliament with 5 women being elected and 2 nominated. However, the total number of women politicians has been quite insignificant since they were a mere 3.18% as compared to men at 96.82% from 1983 to 1992.

The various new and emerging political parties' manifestos did not also give prominence to women, preferring instead to relegate them to "Women's Wings" thus denying them the mainstream participation that women were so keen to gain.

YWCA believed that to be able to choose the right leaders, the voter must be informed and was committed to reaching as many women voters as possible with civic education to make sure that every eligible person was aware of the power of the vote and used it positively in order to create a better society, in which women could participate equally, freely and effectively with men in policy making.

YWCA thus felt it was best placed to undertake an educational activity of a wide magnitude as it already had a large target group, the infrastructure, wide coverage of most parts of the country, and the will to enhance the socio-political status of women at large.

It embarked on the project with gusto, immediately developing a proposal detailing a vigorous workplan to hold a series of workshops whose goal was to "sensitize women on the gender dimension of the democratization process as it pertains to socio-economic and political issues."

The objectives were:

- to raise awareness on women's role as voters;
- to raise awareness on women's role as potential candidates for parliamentary and civic seats;
- to raise awareness on their potential to influence the future direction of the country socially, culturally, economically and politically.

To prepare women for the awareness creation, YWCA placed advertisements in the media encouraging women to register as voters.

Closer to the elections in December 1992, advertisements were once again placed encouraging women to actually vote.

There were two day workshops organized throughout the country in the branches where YWCA was operating for a wide spectrum of women. Communication barrier was overcome by the use of local dialects in areas where English, the official language or Kiswahili, the National language, were not easily understood.

Resource persons such as lawyers, sociologists, women politicians, and women's leaders were invited to facilitate at these workshops.

Topics revolved around several themes such as:

- The Impact of Pluralism on the Mainstreaming of Women
- Full and Positive Participation of Women in Government, Political and Economic Affairs
- Women, Law and the Democratization Process
- The Role of Women as Voters

The Impact of the Workshops on Female Voters

YWCA was determined to disseminate as much useful information as possible but at the same time use a participatory approach to empowering women not only to vote but to become decision makers at all levels.

Participants were enlightened on the value of their vote and the fact that they are the majority of voters. They were made aware that their votes are much sought after at election time, yet women are not in the mainstream of the country's development. They were urged to start the process of change with their vote. It was stressed that their numerical majority was their strength and indeed the power with which they could elect to power representatives who would ensure equality and justice for women, and everyone's right to a decent living.

The important role of women in decision making positions was stressed. Women needed to be in decision making positions in order to directly influence matters affecting them as it is a truism that if women are absent from the policy making decisions, they cannot DIRECTLY influence policies affecting them. The further women are from power the more they will be marginalized and the further their issues and concerns will be relegated to low priorities.

Qualifications of gender sensitive candidates were discussed and the voting procedure simulated. Individual responsibility in ensuring free and fair elections was emphasized and linkages to organize broad based networks capable of influencing national policy making formed.

Participants also looked at the cultural influences which mitigate against women's performance in leadership roles.

They observed that it is apparent that women suffer from rather a poor self-image because of the way they have been educated; an impression very often strengthened by their cultural, social and occupational experience. It is only on reaching adulthood, and not always then, that this is realized. Without this understanding, there can be no change in behavior or attitude.

Martina Horner, an English Psychologist, notes that the more gifted women are, the more they suffer from anxiety based on a fear of success because they are unaccustomed to "social success." Because they expect the worst, their behavior unconsciously favors the failure that they are encouraged by their negative attitudes. Once this conditioning has been internalized, the more a woman is unable to imagine success, the more she will be limited in her role models and all the more so in her power and desire for change.

Women resolved to look anew at the way they were socializing their children, both male and female. They were determined to see women (re)gaining a positive view of other women, and men of women, as they could no longer afford such a devalued and depreciated view of themselves.

Output of the Workshops

- A total of 1,102 were reached directly and numerous others indirectly through the spread of information by the participants.

- YWCA organized a total of 11 workshops and recruited 22 resource personnel who led discussions and facilitated the various topics.

- Awareness was increased or created on the impact that voting has on socio-economic development of the country.

- Awareness was also created on the awareness of participants support for gender sensitive leaders of either sex.

- Participant's skills in systematically analyzing how some cultural practices have infringed on the rights of women was developed with the resultant awareness that women can play a role to change the status quo.

Women also made the following recommendations:

- legal education should be given to all women, especially the (Marriage Act and the Law of Succession);

- paralegal officers should be trained and deployed in the rural areas;

- voter education should be continued to prepare women for the next general elections and reach as many voters as possible;

- gender sensitization and education be given to both women and men;

- seminars/workshops be organized from locational level to national level;

- funds be made available to help women candidates during the campaign period;

- YWCA should integrate civic education into its programs and continue providing this education.

As a result of YWCA involvement and the participation of different organizations in civic education, over 65 women declared their intentions to run for Parliamentary and civic elections. Sixteen actually participated out of which six women were elected to parliament, the biggest number since independence.

In responding to the recommendations made by women following an evaluation commissioned by the YWCA, it has become apparent that the need for civic education is a reality.

The YWCA has therefore developed a curriculum on "Civic Education for Gender Equity" which is aimed at addressing this need. Currently, donor support is being sought to enable the YWCA continue the voter education and in the process team up with other organizations with similar objectives for a wider outreach. The YWCA will also be able to market the civic education curriculum and in the process act as consultants in this field.

The main constraint experienced is lack of immediate funding to carry on this activity.

YWCA's Relationship with Donors

YWCA works with different donors on specific programs and projects. Some of the major donors are Ecumenical Organizations which are in solidarity with the YWCA as an ecumenical movement. Goals of these donors usually coincide with YWCA's own goals.

USAID is another donor of the YWCA supporting a project on "Partnership to Enhance Women's Participation in Development" with a component on institutional development and another on village level activities. Part of the agreement involves partnership of YWCA with a U.S. PVO, an arrangement whose success has exceeded all expectations in this particular case.

However, the process of negotiating the grant with USAID took an inordinate two years with several rewrites of the proposal, refocusing on different issues and generally numerous meetings between the USAID and YWCA offices in Nairobi. The requirement for grantees to contribute at least one-third of the total funding is also very difficult to meet (at times) and should be treated more flexibly.

The YWCA appreciates the support received from USAID in the production of the various documents required in order to register with USAID, which were also quite great in number.

It has been noted that where there are differences between the Grantor and the Grantee, open discussions and transparency usually settles the problem. This strategy has worked successfully for the YWCA over the years. At times, it may be necessary to educate the donor more deeply on one's activities to provide a better background of understanding. Each Grantee should be regarded in their own right and flexibility applied to avoid application of set uniform standards which may not be effect, for example, monthly or quarterly reports may show results in a health project but a village based income generating activity may depend on the seasons and varying factors and show results after six months onwards. Such factors should be taken into consideration by the donor who should not see a project just as another report on the computer.

Face to face meetings where possible, go a long way in building trust and confidence between the Grantor and Grantee. The grant period should not be limited to only a one time grant but should leave room for extension as some projects begin to show an impact after a minimum of three years and need to be supported for another term for maximum effectiveness.

Conclusion: Civil Society, Democracy and Development in Africa

Civil Society, Democracy and Development in Africa! Is this an illusion or is the reality obtainable?

African problems go back to the colonial era which left the continent with artificial boundaries which have brought about in many nations, a lack of socio-political cohesion.

One needs only to mention Rwanda, Angola, Mozambique, Liberia, Zaire to mention but a few, to conjure up a picture of Africa in turmoil.

According to Professor Adebayo Adedeji, the fundamental cause of Africa's recurrent crisis *is* that it *has* yet to experience the degree of structural transformation and *political* diversification required to move the continent away from inherited colonial economic structures (italics mine).

For most Africans, majority of whom live in rural areas and whose literacy level is quite low, the tendency to deitify a leader has led to a syndrome in which one waits to be led rather than play her/his role in collective governance in which checks and balances are freely recognized and implemented. Collective governance leads to a situation of solidarity. Solidarity concerns the whole society, children, the youth, women and men all with a vision of strengthening national, social development policies which impact on them positively. In addition to this, the issues of "Gender, Culture and Development" should be integrated into this concept.

The answer lies in the conscientization of the whole society and the de-mystification of the African leadership at the higher level.

It calls for women's issues to be mainstreamed into the ongoing policy statements and development practices. It calls for encouragement of a better involvement of women in the existing power systems. Women build rather than destroy, they give birth and defend lives, they do not destroy (Emma Hilario, Peru, 1993).

While preserving the positive aspects of African societies, it is necessary to set aside negative factors questioning a more egalitarian and equitable power relationship for women. Such activities must lead in the end, to the harmonization of socio-political interventions, to the institutional reinforcement of organizations affected on fundamental problems regarding the future of African societies and women's issues, and their education in particular.

Civil Society, Democracy and Development in Africa

Paper Presented at a Workshop Held
from June 9 and 10, 1994 at the
Carnegie Endowment for International Peace
Washington, D.C.
by Ms. Emelia Adjepong
Executive Director
International Federation of Women's Lawyers (FIDA)

I must first of all introduce to you the organization I represent, FIDA Ghana. FIDA Ghana is comprised of women lawyers coming from all spheres of legal activity in Ghana. The international body to which it is affiliated is a non-political and non-profit making organization. FIDA Ghana shares the same broad aims and objectives as the international body and these are:

a. to promote the principles and aims of the United Nations in their legal and social aspects

b. to enhance and promote the welfare of women and children realizing that on the women and children's well-being depends the happiness of the home and the strength of society.

To realize these objectives, FIDA Ghana in its efforts of empowerment of women through the law operates along these lines:

i. educating women about the constitution and laws of Ghana, especially as they affect women and children

ii. offering legal counseling to women and where necessary providing them with representation in court

iii. making proposals for changes in law and customs where necessary for the benefit of women and children.

The services are offered entirely free of charge.

FIDA is funded through the kind assistance of a number of donor agencies. Local fund raising activities are also organized to raise funds for our programs. The program of activities include legal aid clinics at FIDA offices in Accra. At the clinic, persons with legal or sometimes social problems come and seek advice and help. There has been a steady increase in the number of persons attending these clinics as the following figures show.

1985-1989	850 cases
1990	330 cases
1991	377 cases
1992	402 cases
1993	660 cases
1994 (Jan-May)	406 cases

It is at the clinics that the real needs of those who seek help are identified and a decision taken whether to offer counseling or take legal action in court.

In addition to the clinics, there have been seminars not only in Accra, the capital, but in other parts of the country to educate and advise women on constitutional and other legal matters. Between 1991 and 1994 seminars have been held in some districts in all the ten regions of the country.

Another important aspect of FIDA activities is publication. The aim of the publication program is to produce papers in simple English and in Ghanaian languages explaining aspects of the law and the constitution. So far the following papers have been published:

a. Wills Act
b. Maintenance of Children
c. Intestate Succession Law
d. Laws on Marriage

It is quite clear that FIDA is now a well established organization and the usefulness of its services has been recognized and acknowledged by the community. Unfortunately, the activities of FIDA are largely centered in Accra because it is operating with persons working on a voluntary basis. There is the need to extend the activities of FIDA further afield in the country. This however calls for establishing a center in at least each of the ten regional capitals of Ghana, something beyond the present resources of the organization.

I will now deal with some of the specific questions posed in the working paper. I must however point out that FIDA is primarily concerned with human rights conferred by the Constitution and how these rights are made known to and enforced by those entitled to them.

In talking about development, it is all too often common to emphasize on economic development to the point of almost ignoring other aspects of development. I believe that the sustainable development envisaged in the working paper should be development in a comprehensive sense, ie., social, political as well as economic development. It is, I think, now well established that a free and stable society in which transparent democratic government is practiced and human rights respected is the best prerequisite for sustainable development.

The contribution of FIDA to sustainable development is that through its programs it generates awareness among the people that they have rights which are clearly defined by law. The machinery for enforcing these rights exist. Specifically, a large proportion of women in Ghana live in the rural areas and are illiterate. Many of them do not know their legal rights. Some who do have a vague notion of their rights do not know how to assert themselves or are afraid to do so through fear and social pressure. The major contribution of FIDA to sustainable development is to open the eyes of these women, liberate them from fear and the influence of some long established customary practices which retard their development and instill confidence in them. Indirectly, this process of liberating has a beneficial economic influence because women play a very important role in the internal economy of Ghana and the more they know of their legal rights the better their contribution in that field.

FIDA believes that within its sphere of operation, it can empower the people by education about the law and by offering advice and, where necessary, professional representation in litigation for those who need legal services but cannot afford the cost of hiring a lawyer.

The main obstacle in the way of FIDA has been inadequate resources. So far, we have been operating mostly in the capital, Accra. Some forays have been made into other parts of the country but these have been limited by financial constraints and the lack of personnel. We have been operating with members who offer their services voluntarily. We therefore need full time resource persons who will go to the people.

Another important obstacle is the existence of certain social and cultural practices which adversely affect women. These practices occur mostly in the rural areas where there is a high level of illiteracy. As I have already mentioned, many women cannot assert or enjoy their legal rights either through poverty, ignorance, apathy or fear. For the poor, it is a question of not being able to afford the cost of seeking help. For the ignorant, it is a question of not even knowing that they have rights which are being violated. For a large number, it is a question of the fear of invoking the wrath of a ghost or an ancestral spirit. Also, there is the fear of incurring the displeasure of the community for refusing to conform to long established customary practices which in fact degrade women. These practices at times affect their health or cause injury to the body. An example is the widowhood rites performed by widows to ward off their husband's ghosts.

I will not hesitate to say that my organization is making a very significant contribution to democracy in Ghana. The influence of women in Ghana is considerable. There are more women voters than there are men. When women are well informed of their constitutional rights and how to enforce them, when women are made to realize that they can play a meaningful role in public life, both at the local and national level, then to that extent, democracy is being strengthened. I believe that so far, in our own modest way, we have been fairly successful in creating this awareness in the women whom we have been able to reach.

CIVIL SOCIETY, DEMOCRACY AND DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA

SESSION III:

THE POLITICAL CONTEXT FOR AFRICAN CIVIL SOCIETY

Dr. Guy Martin, Clark Atlanta University: "Democratization and Governance in Africa: Typology and General Trends"

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DEMOCRATIZATION AND GOVERNANCE IN AFRICA: GENERAL TRENDS AND TYPOLOGY

by

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1. DEMOCRATIZATION & GOVERNANCE IN AFRICA: A GROWING AREA OF RESEARCH

Since the spring of 1990, the winds of change have swept throughout Africa, signalling the dawn of a new era variously referred to as the "second independence" (Nzongola 1987), the "second liberation" (Ayittey, 1992:305-34; Diamond 1992b) or the "springtime of Africa" (Bourgi & Casteran 1991). After three decades of authoritarian one-party rule characterized by political repression, human rights abuses, economic mismanagement, nepotism and corruption, democracy has spread like bushfire throughout Africa. According to the latest evaluation of the Carter Center in Atlanta (Africa Demos, July/August 1993:19), out of a total of 51 Sub-Saharan African countries, 15 may be described as "democratic", seven are under a "directed democracy" regime, and 24 are in transition to democracy, with various degrees of commitment. It is generally agreed that the Benin National Conference (19-28 February 1990) marked the beginning of this second independence movement. Four years later, it is necessary to take stock, look back and reflect on the achievements, problems and prospects of democratization in Africa.

While many countries experienced relatively peaceful democratic transitions from military dictatorship to civilian, multiparty democracy (Congo, Madagascar, Mali, Niger), others went through a process of guided military transition (Burkina Faso, Ghana, Guinea, Nigeria). And while some countries experienced co-opted transitions in which the incumbent president, acting promptly, managed to control (and even subvert) the transition process (Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, Gabon, Kenya), there have been two extreme cases of authoritarian military reaction leading to dual authority structure (Togo and Zaire). Thus, while democracy continues on the upswing throughout Africa, leaders such as Eyadema, Mobutu and Moi are a constant reminder that autocracy is far from vanquished. Finally, in a number of countries (Cote d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Ghana, Zambia) a second, post-transition phase of elections worthy of scrutiny is coming up in late 1994 and 1995.

The purpose of this paper is twofold. First, it aims at presenting an overview of the on-going debate on democratization and governance in Africa in terms of the main problematic, themes and issues. Second, it offers a typology designed to help make sense of the varied and complex processes of democratic transition currently unfolding in Africa. This should, hopefully, shed some light on the political environment in which emerging civil societies in Africa operate.

2. A SURVEY OF THE LITERATURE ON DEMOCRATIZATION & GOVERNANCE IN AFRICA

While the second independence movement is a relatively recent phenomenon in Africa, it has already given rise to an abundant and rapidly growing literature, mostly in the form of unpublished (academic or policy) papers; newspaper, magazine and academic journal articles; and single-authored books or edited volumes.

The present survey -- obviously limited in time and space -- cannot pretend to be exhaustive, it only constitutes, at best, a brief overview of what are generally considered to be the most notable and significant academic contributions published in English and French on this subject during the last eight years (1986-1994), including work in progress. It essentially focuses on general works and mentions country case-studies only to the extent that they constitute a significant contribution to the literature. Our geographical coverage is limited to Sub-Saharan Africa (thus excluding North Africa); only what we consider to be the most significant works on South Africa (a country on which there is abundant literature) have been mentioned.

The mushrooming literature on democratization and governance in Africa makes it difficult to establish any clear and firm classification. However, one may tentatively distinguish between the following categories of writings, which will be examined successively in what follows:

(1) Pioneering works on the changing structure of power and the emergence of democracy in Africa (1986-89).
(2) Major theoretical contributions to the study of democracy and governance in Africa.
(3) Recent studies on democratic transition/political reform in Africa (1990-94).

2.1. Pioneering Works on the Changing Structure of Power and the Emergence of Democracy in Africa

The emerging literature on political liberalization in Africa could arguably be traced back to early critiques of authoritarian (civilian or military) one-party (or one-man) rule characterized by political repression, human rights abuses, economic and financial mismanagement, nepotism and corruption. First among these were studies on personal rule and the authoritarian syndrome in Africa, such as that of Jackson & Rosberg (1982), who suggested a typology of personal rule (prince, autocrat, prophet and tyrant); or Decalo (1982), who focused on extreme cases of personal dictatorship (Macias Nguema of Equatorial Guinea, Idi Amin of Uganda, and Bokassa of the Central African Republic). In a pioneering collection of essays, Dov Ronen and contributors (1986) boldly broached the subject of pluralism and democracy in Africa at a time when it was not fashionable to do so.

Then came radical (or Neo-Marxist) critiques of the African one-party state viewed as antithetical to democracy in the sense that it was considered to be ideologically and functionally incapable of satisfying basic popular needs and aspirations. In a collection of cogently argued assays, Nzongola-Ntalaja (1978) observes that in Africa, independence has not brought about peace, security and development to the majority of African peoples, but rather oppression and despair. "In this contest", argues Nzongola, "the struggle for genuine liberation [the "second independence" movement] involves the transformation of the inherited structures of the state and the economy in order to make them capable of serving the interests of African workers and peasants (Nzongola-Ntalaja, 1987:ix-x).

The contributions in Meyns & Nabudere (1989), which are the result of a rare collaborative research endeavor between African and German political scientists (and include case studies of Burkina, Ghana, Kenya, Mauritius, Nigeria, Sierra-Leone, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe), also illustrate this trend. Similarly, the pioneering contributions of leading African scholars assembled by Anyang' Nyong'o (1987) have been among the first to examine how various authoritarian regimes (Ghana, Kenya, Liberia, Morocco, South Africa, Swaziland, Uganda and Zaire) have been progressively challenged from below by emerging national-popular alliances and coalitions. In the same vein, the essays edited by Cohen & Goulbourne (1991), analyze the decline of one-party rule and African socialism and examine the post-colonial order in Africa; theoretical chapters are followed by case studies of the prospects for democracy in Botswana, Ghana, Uganda, South Africa and Sudan. While far less radical in tone and substance, the contributions of a group of leading Kenyan and Ugandan scholars edited by Oyugi et al. (1987) and focusing mainly on East Africa clearly fall within the same category, as do the exhaustive and innovative studies on Botswana, Ghana, Nigeria, Senegal, Uganda and Zimbabwe assembled by Diamond et al. (1988).

2.2 Major Theoretical Contributions to the Study of Democracy and Governance in Africa

2.2.1 Major Theoretical Contributions to the Study of Political Change and Democracy in Africa

The collection of essays edited by Chabal (1986) was among the first works to attempt to re-assess the aims, methods, concepts and theories which Africanists had hitherto applied to the study of African politics and to suggest new approaches (grounded in universal political theory and African history) to contemporary African political theory and practice. The contributions by Bayart (1986) and Sklar (1986) stand out by their incisiveness and originality. Thus, Sklar argues that Africa needs a "Developmental democracy" that should include "the core values of social, participatory, and consociational democracy as well as the specifically liberal elements of limited government and individual self-development" (Sklar, 1986:27-8). Chabal pursued this quest for theoretical innovation on his own in a recent book (Chabal 1994) aimed at reinterpreting contemporary African politics through a comparative conceptual framework grounded in African history while also offering a plausible interpretation of Africa's present predicament and possible future. In a strikingly original work, Robert Fatton, Jr. (1987) analyzed Senegal's emerging bourgeois liberal democracy in terms of the Gramscian concepts of "organic crisis", "organic intellectuals", and "passive revolution" with great success. In a more recent book, Fatton (1992) suggests a new analytical framework based on a class analysis that reveals the hegemonic power of the ruling class ("statocracy"), and on the dialectical interaction of state and civil society predicated upon the interrelatedness of culture, power, production, exchange and consumption relations in contemporary Africa.

Like Fatton's earlier work, the seminal study by French political scientist Jean-Francois Bayart (1989 & 1993) builds on the Gramscian notions of the post-colonial "historic bloc" (a class in the process of formation rather than a dominant class); "hegemonic quest" (a cooptation of the leadership elements of the rural and urban constituencies into established oligarchical structures); and "passive revolution" (the promotion of social and economic change through the "reciprocal assimilation" of elites in both the public and private sectors, in town and countryside) to provide a fresh perspective on the fundamental questions of African political science relating to the genesis of the state, state-society relations, the historicity of African societies and their impact on the structuring of power relationships. The collective work by Chazan et al. (1992) also tries to break new theoretical ground by proposing a "political interaction" framework which presumes that the state-society relationship is central to understanding the political dynamics of Africa today and which focuses on identifying the multiple factors at work on the African political scene and tracing their diverse dynamics over time (Chazan et al., 1992:22-31). In a highly controversial work, Ayittey (1992) argues that black neo-colonialism, not white colonialism and neo-colonialism, is to blame for Africa's present predicament, and that a second liberation struggle that will sweep away black kleptocracy and rediscover African traditions is now building up throughout Africa.

2.2.2 Major Theoretical Contributions to the Study of Governance in Africa

The concept of "governance" first emerged out of two seminars organized by the Carter Center's African Governance Program in February 1989 and March 1990, respectively, whose working papers were eventually published in two volumes (CCEU 1989; CCEU 1990). The seminars' discussions centered around the failure of authoritarian rule in contemporary African states and the need to create efficient and accountable African regimes and political institutions. The first volume contains 28 contributions structured around five main themes, namely: community governance and "high politics"; prospects for progressive statecraft in Africa; regime types and prospects for democratization; the informal governance of Africa by aid agencies; and Perestroika without Glasnost. The second volume consists of 27 essays organized around five sections, namely: the case for democratization and political

renewal; economic restructuring: prelude to, or product of, political renewal? the political capacity of voluntary and communal associations; alternative models and mechanisms of political reform: Ethiopia, Ghana, Somalia & Uganda; and what can be done?

A fuller theoretical elaboration of the concept of "governance" is contained in the essays edited by Hyden & Bratton (1992) which examine how certain African countries (namely Botswana, Burkina, Ghana, Kenya, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Tanzania and Zaire) are being governed and what the constraints and opportunities for political reform are in these countries. The authors' focus on governance (defined as the management of regime relations, i.e. the rules that set the framework for the conduct of politics) marks a new departure in African politics, recognizing the potential significance of actors other than governments, notably the various associations that make up civil society. Observing that "by curbing associational life, African regimes have fostered blind compliance and a lack of concern for a strong civil public realm", Hyden suggests that "the ongoing efforts to privatize Africa's economies are likely to enhance stable forms of pluralist democracy only to the extent to which this process also strengthens the civic public realm" (Hyden, 1992:24-5). Starting with its seminal 1989 report, and in subsequent publications (World Bank, 1990 & 1992), the World Bank enthusiastically endorsed the concept of governance while giving it a slightly different twist more adapted to its developmental goals and policies. Thus, the Banks ideologues redefined governance as "the manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country's economic and social resources for development". For the World Bank, "Good governance is synonymous with sound development management" (World Bank 1992:1).

2.3 Recent Studies on Political Reform and Democratic Transition in Africa (1990-1994)

Arguably the first book-length analysis of the end of autocracy and the rise of democracy in Africa is the highly readable and penetrating -- if somewhat impressionistic -- account of Bourgi & Casteran (1991). At about the same time, a lively debate on the challenges, opportunities, problems and prospects of democracy in Africa has been raging in various academic fora and periodicals, most notably the Journal of Democracy in the U.S.; Politique africaine in France; and the CODESRIA Bulletin in Africa. It is noteworthy that such a debate, recognizing democracy as a developmental necessity, focuses mainly on improved systems of democratic governance and are engaged by Africanists of all ideological stripes across the world, notably by many African intellectuals who only yesterday were subjected to ruthless repression for daring to criticize dictatorial regimes. In a nutshell, these debates center around the following themes: (1) divergent perceptions of the concept of democracy; (2) the state and civil society; (3) multiparty systems and democracy and (4) democracy and development. Each of these will be briefly examined in the following sections.

2.3.1 Divergent Perceptions of the Concept of Democracy

As the initiation of democratization processes becomes a prerequisite for the continuation of economic and financial assistance from the West (a subject to which we shall return later), the fundamental question of whether democracy is a universal or purely Western concept has emerged once again. While most authors would agree with Abraham Lincoln's definition of democracy as "Government of the people, by the people, for the people" (Address of November 19, 1863), a distinction must be drawn between the value of the concept of democracy and its actual application in a given context. Various authors (Anyang' Nyong'o 1987; Mamdani 1990a; Meyns 1992; Onimode 1992; Post 1991) have stressed the universality of democracy, and the centrality of human rights to the concept of democracy.

Similarly, Bayart (1986:110) noted that such concepts as human rights and democracy were integral elements in traditional African political philosophy. Now that there is widespread agreement on the desirability of democratic development, the question is no longer whether democracy should be instituted, but how (Kuhne 1992:25).

Definitions of democracy vary from the extremes of narrow and wide interpretations, from institutional change to socio-economic emancipation and the development of a democratic culture. Broad conceptions of democracy are adopted by N. Bazaara (in Stetter 1990:17); Imam (1992:102); and Toulabor (1991:58). Given the fact that democratization is a lengthy process that presupposes the creation of minimal conditions, a narrow definition has generally been adopted by policy-makers for practical reasons ("they have to start somewhere"); in international political negotiations (where financial aid decisions are linked to political conditionality); and by some African leaders in their quest for legitimacy. Democracy can be defined either in behaviorist terms (*true* competition and participation; *effective* political freedom) or in structural terms (political institutions, electoral systems and independent legislate and judiciary appropriate to a multiparty system) (Bratton 1989b:421; Riley 1991:4-7; Sandbrook 1988:241).

Healy & Robinson (1991:151) draw an interesting distinction between three successive stages in the democratization process, namely *political liberalization* (guarantee of constitutional rights), *political accountability* (a move towards more inclusive politics) and the *democratization process* itself (involving the introduction of genuine political competition). The significance of this distinction is underscored by Lemarchand (1992b:178) who, following Bratton & van de Walle (1992b:29), observes that liberalization can occur without democratization, and that the end of authoritarian rule may, in some cases, be followed by anarchy or increased corruption. To a significant degree, the other points of discussion in the debate (the state and civil society; multiparty systems and democracy; and democracy and development) derive from these divergent perceptions of the concept of democracy.

2.3.2 The State and Civil Society in Africa

As our theoretical overview clearly demonstrates (see par. 2.2 above), one subject in particular has attracted the attention and mobilized the energies of the Africanist community, namely the complex network of private social forces (non-governmental organizations/NGOs and people's organizations/POs.) subsumed under the generic label of "civil society" (such as civic associations, voluntary organizations, etc.) and its relationship to a post-colonial African state viewed as dysfunctional and predatory. Following the seminal work by Rothchild & Chazan (1988), a debate has been raging between those who tend to idealize civil society as the embodiment of the democratic ideal (Bratton, 1989a, 1989b & 1994a; Diamond 1989; Hyden 1989; Joseph 1991), and those, more skeptical, who warn that the state-society dichotomy oversimplifies a complex reality, and that African NGOs and Pos can also be agents of non-democratic (i.e. reactionary) political and social forces (Chazan 1992; Fatton 1992 & 1993; Geschiere 1990; Lemarchand 1992a). A forthcoming book edited by Harbeson et al. (1994) which examines the potential value of the concept of civil society for enhancing the current understanding of state-society relations in Africa, with particular emphasis on the cases of Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda and Zaire, will hopefully shed further light on this issue.

2.3.3 Multiparty Systems and Democracy

There is a tendency in the liberal tradition to equate a multiparty system with democracy. Indeed, for most Western donors, democratic political reform means multiparty activity and competitive elections.

Yet most authors now agree that multiparty activity constitutes a necessary, but by no means sufficient ingredient of a democratic system (Anyang' Nyong'o 1988a:74; Ben Yahmed 1990; Bourgi 1994; Imam 1992:103; Mamdani 1992:25; Toulabor 1991:59). As Ben Yahmed (1990:5) warned, "multipartyism is not democracy, far from it [...] the African people who are satisfied with multiparty activity as a democratic gimmick will soon be disappointed". Some authors (Bourgi 1994; Ellis 1991; Niandou Souley 1991) even go as far as to argue that in some countries, the current transition to a multiparty system is merely a cosmetic change designed to legitimate the existing regimes. The flawed and contested elections that have recently taken place in Cameroon, Gabon, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, and Togo, would tend to support this view. In this context, the multiparty system may be viewed simply as an arena in which the political elite (government and opposition) competes for access to the state's resources.

2.3.4 Democracy and Development

The central issue being addressed here is whether democracy is prerequisite for development, or development a prerequisite for democracy. This old debate has gained renewed saliency because of the dismal failure of authoritarian regimes to provide any measure of economic development, and because of the severity and urgency of the African economic crisis. Thus, Africa is faced with the daunting task of effecting democratic change under conditions of severe financial scarcity and tight economic constraints imposed by the bilateral donors' and international financial institutions conditionalities. As Anyang' Nyong'o (1992:99) succinctly puts it, "After thirty years of independence, there is no convincing correlation between dictatorships or authoritarian regimes and higher levels of economic growth or development in Africa. If anything, the more repressive regimes have done worse than the more liberal ones. In its seminal 1989 report and in subsequent publications, the World Bank (1989; 1992) took the opposite view that there is a positive, causal relationship between political liberalization and successful economic reform. This led both multilateral and bilateral aid donors to establish a linkage (known as "political conditionality") between the implementation of political reform by African countries and the provision of economic and financial assistance to those countries.

There is little consensus of opinion in the academic community with regard to the question of whether democracy is a prerequisite for development or vice versa. Some authors believe that democracy does not necessarily lead to economic development, and that democratization usually gives rise to many economic expectations that cannot possibly be satisfied in the short-term (Healey & Robinson 1992:157; Kuhne 1992:13; Mkandawire 1992:24). Others start form the assumption that economic growth is a favorable condition for the development of democracy (Clapham 1993; Founou-Tchigoua 1992:4-7; Onimode 1992:7; Southall 19911:14; Tetzlaff 1991; Weiland 1991:14). The more cautious scholars refuse to be caught in the "which comes first" trap. As Peter Meyns wisely observes, "it does not make sense to define development as the prerequisite for democracy, nor will it do to call for democracy as a condition for development. Both assertions have some truth in them, but they need to be seen in the dialectical relationship based on reciprocal dependence" (Meyns 1992:23-4).

3. DEMOCRATIZATION AND GOVERNANCE IN AFRICA: A RESEARCH AGENDA

In spite of its brevity, the preceding overview reveals numerous gaps and shortcomings in the existing literature on governance and democratization in Africa. The purpose of this section is to identify some of these gaps and shortcomings and to suggest potentially fruitful avenues of future research in this area.

3.1 Uneven Country Coverage

Our literature overview reveals a striking imbalance in the coverage of African countries in the sense that English-speaking countries (notably Botswana, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Uganda and Zambia) are extensively covered while Francophone countries (with the possible exception of Cameroon, Senegal and Zaire) and Lusophone countries are hardly ever mentioned. Indeed, except for the articles by Allen (1992) on Benin; Martin (1993) on Mali; Nzouankeu (1993) on Benin & Mali; and Robinson (1992) on Burkina Faso & Niger, studies on Francophone Africa in English are few and far between. Two on-going research projects shall, hopefully, fill this major gap in the literature. One is the volume on Political Reform in Francophone Africa edited by John Clark & David Gardinier, which includes case-studies of 16 Francophone African countries. The other is the collection of essays by African scholars entitled Francophone Africa assembled by the present author which numbers 12 similar case studies (for details, see section 4.5 below). One subject in particular, the National Conference phenomenon in Francophone Africa, deserves much greater attention from scholars than the brief overviews that Morel (1992), Nzouankeu (1992), and Robinson (1992) have devoted to this issue. Two significant exceptions to this gap in French are: (1) the thought-provoking book by Eboussi Boulaga (1993) on the National Conferences in Francophone Africa; and (2) the excellent (if somewhat outdated) collection of essays by various African and French scholars who participated in a December 1990 Paris colloquium put together by Gerand Conac (1993) including, inter alia, case studies of Benin, Burundi, Cameroon, Chad, Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, Gabon, Guinea, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal and Zaire.

3.2 Theory versus Practice

Our survey reveals that while a significant and rapidly growing body of literature on the general and theoretical aspects of political reform and democratization in Africa currently exists, detailed country case-studies of democratic transition based on extensive field-work are still too few. Of particular interests would be comparative studies of the "democratic pioneers" such as Benin, Botswana, Mauritius and Senegal, as well as case-studies of the many African countries who, during the last four years, have undergone a process of democratic transition through national elections. In this regard, one would like to know precisely the extent to which these new, democratically-elected governments have been able (or unable) to implement their programs of political reform and to pursue economic and social policies consistent with popular aspirations and demands (particularly in view of the external constraints imposes by the international financial institutions). Of particular relevance here would be further studies (in addition to those of Cheru 1989; Deng et al. 1991; and Gibson et al. 1992) of the short, medium and long-term effects of the Structural Adjustment Programs on the economic development and democratization processes of the various African states.

3.3 Democracy in Africa: Political Parties, Political Culture, Religion and Media

A fascinating aspect of the current democratization processes in Africa is the resurgence and emergence of a multiplicity of political parties based on ethno-regional, corporatist, class (and sometimes individual) interests rather than on ideology. Yet very few recent studies (with the notable exception of the already dated volume edited by Meyns & Nabudere 1989) focus on the social and political basis, programs and functioning of these vital political actors. An on-going research project under the general editorship of the present author on Political Parties of Sub-Saharan Africa (Martin 1995) will, hopefully, partially fill this gap.

Most authors lament the lack of a "democratic culture" in Africa (i.e. the absence of values, ideals and behavioral patterns usually associated with the Western democratic ethos). Yet (with the possible exception of Ayittey, 1992:37-77 and Simiyu, 1987:49-70), very little research has been undertaken on the extent to which African traditional political culture and institutions could merge with modern democratic ideals to create a specifically African political culture. A related topic of inquiry still very much neglected is the impact of (Christian, Islamic, syncretic and traditional African) religion on the political culture and democratization processes of African countries. The newly-found freedom of the press in Africa has led to the proliferation of the print and audio-visual media as a crucial element in the political liberalization process. Yet neither these developments, nor the role and impact of African journalists in initiating and sustaining democratization processes, have been the object of systematic investigation.

3.4 The Social Basis of Democratization in Africa: Ethnicity, Social Groups and Social Movements, and Popular Participation.

Democratization in Africa has brought the issues of regionalism and ethnicity to the fore, raising a number of intriguing questions: to what extent can a multi-party system accommodate regional/ethnic diversity? Is it possible and desirable for political parties to be organized along regional/ethnic lines? Is it possible to keep regional/ethnic rivalry in check through appropriate legal-institutional mechanisms? Nigeria's adoption of a two-party system was such an effort that failed. Ethiopia's attempt at encouraging the creation of political parties along ethnic lines also failed (Mohammed 1993). In some states (Cameroon, Congo, Guinea), multi-party democracy has exacerbated ethnic tensions, while in others (Kenya, Zaire) one observes the dangerous rise of state-sponsored ethnic violence (Africa Watch 1993b). Hopefully, the on-going project on Ethnic Conflict and Democratization in Africa directed by Harvey Glickman (with case studies of Benin, Cameroon, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mali, South Africa, Sudan, Tanzania and Zimbabwe written by African scholars) will shed some light on an area in dire need of further research.

The power and role of various strategically positioned social groups (such as the army, police and security forces) in the African democratization processes has generally been overlooked in the literature we surveyed. We definitely need to know more about the values, attitude and interests of these groups in the current political reform process, and about the possible constitutional and institutional checks to potential abuses of power by them. In addition, most studies focus on the African elites while surprisingly little attention has been given to those social groups for whom and with whom the democratic revolution was initiated, namely the rural and urban popular masses and other politically and economically marginalized social groups such as peasants, women and youth (one exception is Roberts & Williams 1991). This exclusive preoccupation with "democratization from above" raises another issue, namely that of studying the political and institutional means of bringing these popular forces and marginalized social groups back into the democratization process.

Four on-going research projects try to address some of these issues. The first is the CODESRIA project on "Social Movements, Social Transformation and the Struggle for Democracy in Africa," which focuses on the democratic transition in Africa and on the relationship between democracy and development (Mamdani et al. 1988), and which culminated in the Dakar meeting of February 1992 on "Democratization Processes in Africa". The second is the AAPS project on "Democratization Processes in Africa" which analyses popular pressures and popular movements for democracy in Africa (Anyang' Nyong'o 1991).

The third is the project on "Political Transitions in Africa" sponsored by the Joint Committee on African Studies (JCAS) of the Social Science Research Council and the American Council of Learned Societies which tries to "extend the analytical universe of political transitions beyond elites and their followings to include people in many different walks of life" and to examine ways of bringing the military back into the analysis of political transitions (SSRC 1994:1-3). The fourth is the Carter Center's African Governance Program May 1994 seminar on "Democratization in Africa" focusing on various key aspects of this process, notably politics and governance; social and political transformation; transitional elections; ethnic mobilization and conflict; and economic reform.

4. A TYPOLOGY OF DEMOCRATIC TRANSITION IN AFRICA

The transition to democracy in Africa is taking different forms and is proceeding at various speeds with different outcomes, depending on the nature of external inducements and on the configuration of domestic socio-political forces. In this regard, it is possible to identify three types of democratic transitions in Africa: (1) regime change via national conference; (2) co-opted democratic transitions; and (3) guided military transitions.

4.1 Regime Change via a National Conference

In this (essentially Francophone) scenario, a broad coalition of the civil society invests itself with sovereign and supreme constitutional powers. It appoints a transitional government with a dual executive. The president is robbed of substantive powers and reduced to a figurehead. A prime minister is elected by the conference as head of the government and is entrusted with the task of managing the transition under the authority and guidance of a provisional legislative body (High or Supreme Council of the Republic). It organizes within a year or so local , municipal, legislative and presidential elections, culminating in the installation of a democratically-elected Head of State. Such a process has taken place in Benin, Congo, Gabon, Mali, and Niger. In Togo and Zaire, it has been arrested in mid-progress. It has been (unsuccessfully) demanded by opposition movements in Burkina Faso, Cameroon, CAR, Chad, Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea, Madagascar and Mauritania.

There are obvious limitations to the degree to which this model of peaceful and orderly transfer of power from military to civilian rule can be replicated. For one thing, to the extent that it is firmly embedded in French philosophical and historical tradition, the concept of sovereign national conference is peculiar to Francophone culture. More specifically, this concept is grounded in Jean-Jacques Rousseau's ideas about popular sovereignty and the people's right to renegotiate the social contract -- a theory which became practice in the Estates-General of the French Revolution of 1789. But while they may be legitimate in the eyes of the African popular masses, sovereign national conferences are not be truly representative of the whole people.

While the conferees claimed to represent the nation in its entirety -- *toutes les forces vives de la nation* -- in reality, they were drawn from the political and intellectual elites of civil society. The inevitability of the outcome (an intra-elitist transfer of power) explains why besieged African autocrats have steadfastly resisted convening national conferences (Robinson 1994:55-60).

4.2 Co-opted Democratic Transitions

In several elections in non-competitive systems, the incumbent president has acted in time to allow multiparty elections. With control over the media and electoral machinery and superior financial

resources, he has been able to defeat the opposition at the ballot box and stay in power despite widespread allegations of fraud. This has happened in Cote d'Ivoire (October 1990); Gabon (September-October 1990; December 1993); Ethiopia (June 1992); and Djibouti (May 1993).

4.3 Guided Military Transitions

In this model, represented most notably by Burkina Faso, Guinea and Nigeria -- and, to a lesser extent, by Ghana and Mauritania -- a military regime retains virtually complete control over the transition process, which is deliberately complex and prolonged. Through its control over state institutions and resources (particularly of the state's finances and security apparatus) and through devious and fraudulent political manoeuvering aimed at defeating the opposition at the ballot box, the military is able to maintain itself in power.

Togo and Zaire constitute two extreme cases of authoritarian military reaction. In Togo, General Gnassingbe Eyadema managed to subvert the transition process by wresting power from the prime minister democratically elected by the National Conference (July-August 1991), Joseph Kokou Koffigoh. Then, through a carefully controlled electoral process and with a little help from his French friends, he achieved a dubious victory in the August 25, 1993 presidential elections with 96.46 per cent of the vote cast (representing only 36.16 per cent of the registered voters). Following Koffigoh's resignation in March 1994 after his party's defeat in the February 1994 parliamentary elections, President Eyadema appointed, on April 22, Edem Kodjo, head of the Togolese Union for Democracy as prime minister. Similarly, in Zaire, Mobutu Sese Seko subverted the transition process by refusing to acknowledge the authority of the prime minister democratically elected by the National Conference, Etienne Tsishekedi and appointed his own government, headed by Faustin Birindwa. Since then, through his control of the state's finances and security apparatus, Mobutu has continued to act as the country's sole executive authority. This has, in effect, created a dual authority structure: one legitimate, but powerless, the other illegitimate, but powerful. As of the time of writing, the situation in Zaire continues to be deadlocked.

Conclusion: Prospects for Democracy in Africa

The final outcome of these on-going processes of democratic transition in Africa is uncertain at best, and experts' analyses and predictions range from guarded optimism to frank pessimism. Thus, Rene Lemarchand (1992:98-100) warns that "there are compelling reasons to fear that the movement toward democracy may contain within itself the seeds of its own undoing", by which he prefers to authoritarian reactionary African autocrats; the fragmentation of opposition forces; the fractious character of African society; the unfavorable economic conditions; and the global economic environment.

In the final analysis economic and political change in Africa will succeed only if it is a home-grown, indigenous process, initiated by the African people themselves, taking into account their own historical, social and cultural values and traditions. In this regard, it would be inappropriate and counter-productive for donor countries to impose the model of Western liberal democracy, understood in the most conventional sense of multi-party electoral competion, could lead to mere formal compliance without "real democracy" (Ake 1993; Newbury 1994; Salim 1992:11, 26-9).

In this context, "real democracy" means substantive (as opposed to formal) democracy. Real democracy goes beyond the formal trappings of democratic political systems (such as multipartyism and elections) to include such elements as accountability and genuine popular participation in the nation's political and economic decision-making process. If democracy is to be sustained over time, firm

foundations for democratic institutions must be created in accordance with local circumstances, and a democratic culture firmly grounded in African values and traditions must be built. As the world's attention is focused elsewhere, Africans must seize the moment and turn inward to find within themselves the solution to their own problems. A momentous task of constitutional and institutional design awaits African intellectuals who, hopefully, will rise to the challenge and make their contribution to the world democratic culture.

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CIVIL SOCIETY, DEMOCRACY AND DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA

SESSION IV:

CONSTRAINTS AND LIMITS OF CIVIL SOCIETY TO INFLUENCE GOVERNMENT

Dr. Dwayne Woods, Purdue University: "The Vertical and Horizontal Dimensions To Associational Politics in Sub-Saharan Africa

Dr. Donald Rothchild, UCLA/Davis: "Activating Civil Society in Africa"

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The Vertical and Horizontal Dimensions to Associational Politics in Sub-Saharan Africa
SESSION IV
Dwayne Woods, Purdue University

Associational Politics in Africa

Before tackling the manner in which associations in Africa interact with one another and seek to influence the state policy arena, it is necessary to establish a conceptual framework that will help us identify the specific characteristics of African associational politics. There are several dimensions to African associational life, but the two most important ones are its formal and informal characteristics.[1] While these two dimensions overlap in many ways, they can be treated separately. The formal sector is, in principle, more structure and potentially closer to policy-making arenas than the informal sector, which is fluid and, by its very nature, difficult to categorize and define.

The formal sector has certain identifiable properties which distinguishes it from the plethora of informal associations that populate the African landscape. The most salient aspect of formal associations is that they are officially recognized by the state and, in most cases, supported by it. Formal associations range from labor unions, student associations, womens groups, chambers of commerce, professional syndicates and peasant cooperatives. These associations have a wide coverage since they are the official representative agents for mass collective action. In a superficial way, many of these associations are structured around quasi-corporatist principles -- meaning that they are few in number, hierarchical and serve as peak associations for local and regional groupings.[2] In theory, this proximity to the state should ensure that formal associations have direct access to influencing state policies; however, this has not consistently been the case.

In contrast to officially recognized groups, there are numerous informal associations which operate outside of the formal context of representation. In other words, they are not generally recognized by the government and are considered threatening because they are beyond the political social control of those in power. Oftentimes, these "type of associations are ascriptive in character, that is, they are ethnic/kinship associations."[3] They are, however, not always based on ascriptive ties. There are informal neighborhood associations, womens groups and student groups which operate outside of the formal purview of the state. In fact, it was these types of associations which played such a pivotal role in mobilizing the "pro-democracy" movements in the late 1980s. Many of these groups operated on the margins of the formal associations; however, they are not completely cut off from them. With the sharpening of the economic crisis throughout the 1980s, they quickly became the source of contestation

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[1] Naomi Chazan, "The New Politics of Participation in Tropical Africa," Comparative Politics, Vol. 14, No. 2 (January 1982): 169-189.

[2] Julius E. Nyang'oro, "On the Concept of 'Corporatism' and the African State," Studies in Comparative International Development, Vol. No. (Winter 1986/1987): 31-55.

[3] Ibid., p. 172.

against the authoritarian regimes in power. Informal women and student associations, in particular, played a pivotal role in galvanizing their supporters against the state.

Although for analytical purposes formal and informal associations are separated into distinct categories, they have never operated in isolation from one another. While most individuals have had no choice but to belong to a "binding formal association," they have also participated in informal bodies. In some cases, these informal associations functioned within inside the formal institutions. In the Côte d'Ivoire, for example, professional and ethnic mutual aid associations are present throughout the urban area. More significantly, they are organized informally inside of formal associations such as labor unions.[4] Thus, there is an overlap between formal and informal groups. How much influence these informal groups have had within the monopolistic representative associations is not well known. There has been little research in this area; however, there are scattered indications that these informal associations have had some impact.

Verticality of Associational Politics

Until recently, associational politics in Africa has largely taken place through the vertical mobilization of individuals and groups by state influenced associations. Vertically mobilized participation occurs when people are induced to belong to a limited number of associations and their impact on the government policy arena is determined by the government itself. Labor unions are examples of vertically integrated associations. These types of associations were generally established or sponsored by governments in postcolonial Africa to influence the pattern of mass collective action.[5] They relied on these associations to mobilize their members for perfunctory occasions such as the celebration of Independence Day. They were otherwise not allowed to actively engage their members in authentic participatory issues, because these issues were deemed as the exclusive domain of the state. Thus, labor unions could not really mobilize workers regarding labor issues, nor could student associations call students to action concerning issues of education.

Strategies of State Control

African states have relied on a variety of strategies to control associational life. They have sought to monitor associations by establishing laws which define what types of associations can form and what types of things they can engage in. Many African governments have also made formal registration a requirement for associations; for example, they are required to make themselves known to the state.[6] In other instances, associations were closely tied to the single party structures which African states relied upon to control the pace of politics in their countries. Associational leaders have been coopted by the state and/or single-party elites. This cooptation took on a variety of different forms. In most instances, it consisted of making associational leaders part and parcel of the small governing elite who used public

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[4] Bernard Delpech, "La Solidartié Populaire Adibjanaise, En chiffres et en dires," Cahiers O.R.S.T.O.M., sér. Sci. Hum., Vol XIX, No 4, (1983): 551-566.

[5] Immanuel Wallerstein, "Voluntary Associations," pp. 338-339 in James S. Coleman and Carl G. Rosberg, Jr. (eds) Political Parties and National Integration in Tropical Africa (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966).

[6] Patrick P. Molutsi and John D. Holm, "Developing Democracy When Civil Society is Weak: The Case of Botswana," African Affairs, Vol. 89, No. 356 (July 1990): 329.

resources for their own personal enrichment. Moreover, within the formal associations, patron-client relationships undermined any form of internal democracy within them. Opportunism and corruption had become the dominant behavioral modes of many of the formal associations in Africa. Even before the onset of the "democratization" movements, most of Africa's formal associations were in crisis. They suffered from opportunism and corruption, which consequently resulted in alienation among the rank and file. Obviously, these traits limited their effectiveness in shaping government policy.

Generally, governments have been unwilling to allow independent associations to develop for fear that they would operate outside of any state control. Independent associations were seen as potential sources of discontent and opposition. Even though many African governments are now paying lip service to "democratization," many of them still take a negative view of an open pluralistic environment.[7] The issue of government relationships with different associations raises a fundamental question about the balance between state and civil society. Presumably, the strengthening of associations will allow them to have the resources to distance themselves from the government. If this distancing is to take place, the horizontal ties of African associations will have to be strengthened considerably.

Horizontal Interactions of African Associations

The vertical mobilization of individuals by state sponsored associations has distorted the manner in which associations develop and interact with one another. This process of mobilization either resulted in a general departicipation of individuals or led to certain groups having a privileged relationship with decision-makers. Although it would be an exaggeration to claim that the officially recognized associations received excessive benefits from the state, they did fare better, in some ways, that the non-organized or informal sectors of society. Urban labor unions, especially those that represented the interest of state sector workers, teacher associations and students have been able to influence the policy-arena in ways that the urban poor and peasants have not. These social groups have been able to do this not because of the capacity of their associations to directly shape policy, but because of the threat that they posed to weak governments with protest in a limited urban setting.

The institutional capacity of African associations is quite limited. This is even more sharply the case in terms of how they interact with one another. Voluntary associations which have escaped state control have remained small and fragmented. There is little pooling of resources between associations which have a common objective. They have internal leadership and staff problems as well as limited technical capacity. These difficulties are compounded by the fact that African associations do not rely upon one another to overcome their individual shortcomings. In order to increase their ability to shape government policy, there is a salient need to build up the networking between associations. The benefits to be derived from networking are indicated by Clark when he states that the "building up strong networks of similar NGOs and projects can help to overcome any sense of isolation and provide useful forums for learning skills and exchanging techniques. Think linkage can be vertical (in which local organizations are tied into

[7] Michael Bratton and Nicolas van de Walle, "Toward Governance in Africa: Popular Demands and State Responses," pp. 27-56 in Goren Hyden and Michael Bratton (eds) Governance and Politics in Africa (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1992).

regional federations and are required to follow the rules of that federation) or horizontal (in which the member organizations all operate on the same level and retain their autonomy.)"[8]

The building up of capable networks is essential in a pluralistic environment. Without the networking, there is a strong possibility that a few dominant associations will skew in their favor the policy-making process. This has important consequences in how resources are allocated, especially for the poor. In a period of transition towards some type of "democracy", these groups are likely to continue to play an important role in shaping "distributional" issues. As Schmitter notes, "those social groups that are in greatest need of collective action (i.e., those with numerous, dispersed and relatively impoverished individuals as potential members) are the least likely to be successful in attracting these members on a rational and voluntary basis." The density of associational life is, therefore, more than likely to be dominated by "small, concentrated and privileged groups" that will have comparatively less difficulty in generating resources and selective incentives to attract members.[9]

International aid agencies need to take into account the "distributional" effects of associational politics. Even if urban associations ground their ideological claims for democracy and participation within broad democratic ideas and principles, they are likely to skew the "distributional" process in their favor. Thus, one of the problematic issues which confronts international development agencies in their effort to promote associations is that they need to take into account how certain urban associations are likely to reproduce the quasi-corporatist patterns of representation. As Schmitter puts it: "left to its own devices, then, the new liberal associability could produce a systematically skewed over representation of dominant class, sectoral and professional interests. Subordinate groups have, of course, the new resource of voting between competing parties to pursue their general subsidization characteristic of the *ancien régime* to participate effectively in the democratic game when it comes to advancing their more particular interests. The practical temptations of neocorporatism, in other words, may outweigh the ideological attractions of pluralism."[10] Donor agencies can influence this outcome because they have a transnational effect on African associational developments and civil society.[11]

Transnational Dimension of African Civil Society

The transnational effect on African civil society is most pronounced through the influence that international donor agencies have on non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Many of the national NGOs rely on international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) for financial and logistical support. INGOs have an impact that goes beyond simply the provision of resources. They influence public opinion on a variety of issues which effect people in developing nations. Human rights, environmental policy and famine relief are some outstanding instances of how INGOs intersect with both national groups

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[8] John Clark, Democratizing Development: The Role of Voluntary Organizations (West Hartford, CT: Kumarian Press, 1991), p. 86.

[9] Phillipe C. Schmitter, "The Consolidation of Democracy and Representation of Social Groups," American Behavioral Scientist, Vol 35, No 4/5 (March/June 1992), p. 436.

[10] Ibid., p. 437.

[11] Paul Ghils, "International civil society: International non-governmental organizations in the international system," International Social Science Journal, No. 133 (August 1992): 417-432.

and the international community. They also play an important role in getting national associations to coordinate their activities by strengthening their horizontal ties. While there is an inherent normative clash involved in outsiders suggesting how others should organize themselves, it is, nevertheless, the case the INGOs do have an impact on what happens in developing nations.

The strengthening of horizontal connections is extremely important if associational groups are to have any effective impact on government policy and "distributional" issues. The more associations are able to coordinate across policy issues and socio-economic cleavages, the more effective they will be in enhancing the capability of African civil society to have some impact on the development process. Moreover, by enhancing the ability of African associations to work together within and across policy issues, it will allow smaller and weaker groups to free-ride off the policy influence of better organized associations. In this instance, free-ridership is not a negative phenomenon but a positive one, since it allows stronger associations to rely on weaker ones as a latent basis of support. By emphasizing the need for African associations to coordinate their activities, international donor's are helping to create an environment of mutual dependencies.

Probably more than anything else, international donor groups can enhance the enabling capacity of African associations by helping to create a space for influencing government actions. This can be done in a variety of ways. The most effective is the linking of aid to how open government agencies are to input from domestic associations. There are several important benefits which can be drawn from stressing linkages. First, international donor agencies send a signal that they consider local input a priority, thereby creating an incentive within government agencies to, even if superficially, take into consideration local or national concerns. Second, in an effort to divide and conquer, governmental agencies are likely to invite a number of associations to participate in the policy arena. In doing so, these agencies will inadvertently put into place an incentive for associations to seek to coordinate their efforts in order to maximize their influence. As Clark notes, "the opportunity to work with government agencies sometimes helps NGOs collaborate among themselves. Preparations for social investment fund in Guatemala, for example, called for NGOs to help develop criteria for government funding of NGOs and, in the process, to share experiences among themselves about what types of projects are working. This led to coordination in the development of NGO strategic plans in the social sectors."[12] With donor agencies emphasizing coordination to associations, this added incentive is more likely to have positive results. Finally, by helping to create a space for influencing, international donor agencies will help generate an incentive for domestic associations to more efficiently mobilize their resources in order to have more access to funds which are available. Theoretically, what this should do is shift part of the burden for programmatic efficiency to voluntary associations. In the same way that interest groups in the United States are often better organized and technically informed than government agencies.

Association Life from the "Bottom Up"

There are a variety of ways of looking at African associations. They can be viewed from the perspective of social groups organizing individuals into associations which represent their interest or attempt to serve as advocacy groups of some kind. Associational dynamics in Africa are shaped as much by collective action problems as they are elsewhere in the world. While there are a plethora of associations which exist in many African countries, particularly in the cities, their coverage is limited. In other words, most Africans probably do not belong to any association at all. Even those that do belong to associational

[12] Op. Cit., p. 80.

groups often participate in them in a limited fashion. As Peil notes, "early studies of associations, especially in the 1950s, drew their data largely from officers, and probably overstated their importance and the size and level of activity of their membership ... The authors failed to note the ephemeral, or at least irregular, nature of many voluntary associations. The small ones (the majority) tend to be highly dependent on the enthusiastic leadership of a few and fade quickly when one or two individuals take up other interests; they only come into effective existence again if new leaders appear. Thus, a town improvement association (probably the most widespread type today) may be very active for a year or two, lapse into quiescence for a few years, then be resurrected by the old leader or a new one: this circular pattern is likely to be more typical than continuous activity."[13]

In this sense, associations are heavily structured by a small social and political elite. This does not mean that associations are not important to Africans, because they are. They do function as interest, recreational, ethnic and advocacy groups. The intensity of associational participation, nevertheless, appears to correlate with "outside" factors. A market women's association will be primarily concerned with mundane issues; however, if the government attempting to arbitrarily close down a market, the organization can be quickly transformed into an association with political overtones.[14] There are some basic characteristics of African associational life. They are the following ones: membership, location, functions and policy impact.

Membership

Many studies of associational life in Africa show that the level of and commitment of membership varies in terms of location, heterogeneity of the population in particular place, and the political and social structure in power. Membership is likely to be higher in urban areas especially in medium to large cities.[15] In some ways, associations replace more informal networks as the primary source of social, economic and political interactions. In urban environment, where the population is quite diverse, primary -- often ethnic -- associations play an important role. Since competition for "limited resources" is intense, belonging to an association is viewed as an important strategy in surviving the urban environment. In more homogenous ethnic environments, other types of associations tend to flourish, notably church and work groups. For that component of the population that does belong to an association, they tend to join more than one. The limited empirical data available for Nigeria and Abidjan generally confirms this observation.[16]

There appears to be an intervening class dimension to associational membership. Lower and middle class urban groups seem to have a higher propensity to join and participate in associations than marginal groups and the very rich. Such an observation, however, needs to be qualified since lower class groups are often passive members and the rich belong often to associations which have a social function such as the rotary and lions clubs.

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[13] Margaret Peil, Cities and Suburbs: Urban Life in West Africa (New York: African Publishing Company, 1981), pp. 217-240.

[14] Ibid., p. 218.

[15] Ibid., p. 219-220.

[16] Ibid., p. 220.

The most active segment of the population in associational life are primary and secondary school teachers. They function as a kind of second stratum -- that is, an intermediary class between the general population and a small privileged elite who monopolize limited socio-economic resources -- in African associational life.[17] This second stratum is extremely important in providing a certain dynamism to associations. They are the ones who are likely to be active rather than passive members. If this observation is true, there are important policy implications to be noted. Enhancing the effectiveness of associational life is likely to be more effective if resources are targeted towards that segment of the population which is most actively involved in African associations. Also, this segment of the population is more likely to be active in cross-ethnic associations.

As Michael Cohen observed in the 1970s in Côte d'Ivoire, cross-ethnic associations have become an integral part of the urban landscape. Even within the one-party system, cross-ethnic associations were able to organize themselves and mobilize their members. In many instances, these associations were formed to put pressure on the government for better urban social services.[18] Both Cohen and Nelson have pointed out in their studies that cross-ethnic associations can have a significant impact on state policies. As an intermediary group, the second stratum looks to cross-ethnic associations as a way of reinforcing their class position in society. Since they are not part of the small circle of elites who have been able to use the state to enrich themselves, they turn to popular social groups to put pressure on the government to provide better social services. It is this social group that has the skills to strengthen horizontal ties across associations in Africa. By linking their interest with the poor, international aid agencies can help limit middle and lower class urban groups from attempting to harness the policy process exclusively for themselves.

Functions

Voluntary associations carry out a wide range of functions. In some cases, they help newly arrived migrants to adapt to a complex urban environment; they help urban residents maintain a link with their native villages; they serve a social function; and they engage in advocacy functions. It is difficult, if not impossible, to present a consistent pattern of the functions of associations. In part, this is the case because of the efforts of postcolonial African states to absorb associations into a set of closely monitored vertical ties with the party and/or the bureaucracy. The functions of associations change in light of the "structure of opportunities" available to them. For example, as Peil notes, "ethnic associations were more prominent forces in national politics in the pre-independence and immediate post independence period than they are today; governments of several countries have seen their potential for disrupting national unity and have banned them."[19] Obviously, this does not mean that ethnic associations disappeared altogether from the social and political scene. They did, however, change their functions. Many of them shifted their attention to improving their native villages. In this context, they lost any overt political function.

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[17] The concept of the second stratum is taken from Leonard Binder's work on Egypt. See Leonard Binder, In a Moment of Enthusiasm: Political Power and the Second Stratum in Egypt (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1978).

[18] Michael Cohen, Urban Policy and Political Conflict in Africa (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974).

[19] Peil, op. cit., p. 225.

For many Africans, associations are important because of their economic functions. They either play an economic role as an advocacy group, such as a labor union or as mutual aid societies. Since many trade unions and chambers of commerce are a formal extension of state institutions, they are probably the least important to their members than other kinds of economic associations. Peil observed among Ghanaian and Nigerian workers that trade union membership was less important to them than other types of membership.[20] Because of the limitations placed on trade union activity by governments and the relative weakness of class identity in many African countries, trade union associations have had a limited impact on their members and governments. This is not the case for the second stratum. Among this social group, trade union associations are important. Primary, secondary and university associations have a much higher level of identification than the small industrial unions in Africa. In addition to the associations described above, there are a growing number of specialized grassroots organizations that are playing an important role in improving the welfare of the people.[21] Some of the most successful ones have been saving and loan associations and neighborhood groups.[22]

Neighborhood associations are heterogeneous. They range from multi-purpose to single-issue groups.[23] Their internal make-up is also quite diverse. Some "associations are highly organized and durable, embracing hundreds of members in pyramidal district-and-block structure and sponsoring activities through specialized committees. Other associations are little more than a caucus of neighbors hastily assembled to deal with some urgent problem and equally quickly dispersed after the emergency has passed. Some associations are true local-level democracies. Others are dominated by elders or local notables whose leadership is based on respect and tradition. Still others are the instruments of local bosses whose power rests on a mixture of coercion and services. Some neighborhood associations are essentially local branches of political parties."[24] What this profile of neighborhood associations implies is that from a policy perspective, it will be necessary to identify neighborhood associations which can potentially provide the broadest benefits. If the objective is to build-up institutions which can broaden participation, then it will be more effective to focus on those neighborhood associations which are structured along democratic lines and target policy areas that can impact on a large constituency.

Neighborhood associations are important elements in any building blocks for constructing civil society because they represent the interest of marginal social groups as well as the urban middle class. While these two groups do not necessarily belong to the same association, they often have a common interest in getting the government to focus on the needs of urban dwellers. Attempting to get these groups to

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[20] Ibid., p. 233.

[21] Pierre Landell-Mills, "Governance and Cultural Change," Journal of Modern African Studies, Vol. 30, No. 4 (1992): 543-567.

[22] Alain Dubresson, Villes et industries en Côte d'Ivoire: Pour une géographie de l'accumulation urbaine (Paris: Karthala, 1989).

[23] Joan N. Nelson, Access to Power: Politics and the Urban Poor in Developing Nations (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1979): p. 275; Scott Mainwaring, "Urban Popular Movements, Identity and Democratization in Brazil," Comparative Political Studies, Vol 20, No 2 (1987): 131-159.

[24] Nelson, op. cit., p. 275.

coordinate their agenda more effectively will increase the likelihood that the benefits generated from their pressure on the government will be collective and not localized to the more privileged areas of a city.

Outside the urban areas, the most important grassroots associations are the self-help and cooperative movements.[25] These associations attempt to improve the material well-being of Africa's rural population. The self-help and cooperative movement in most African countries is highly fragmented and suffers from many internal organizational problems. As Hamer puts it: "in joining cooperatives and self-help societies, members share a mutual interest in wishing to increase their standard of living, but maximization of individual goals in controlling money and property often threaten cooperation. Secondly, the continuity of societies is frequently jeopardized by petty corruption on the part of both members and committeemen. Finally, state attempts at control often conflict with the more parochial interests and participatory control of local and regionally based associations."[26]

Postcolonial African governments have undermined self-help societies and rural cooperatives in a number of different ways. In some instances, they have sought to subsume these types of associations under the banner of a national government federation. Out of fear that these associations will undermine the authority of the state in the periphery, the state tries to impose its control over them. This often results in a decline in the participatory quality of the association. In Kenya, the government "... so limited the spontaneous formation of cooperatives that government had to be involved, but the regulatory measures so severely curtailed autonomy that the end results left cooperatives little more than government bureaucracies."[27]

By far the most difficult task for international aid donors and domestic groups will be the scaling up of rural associations. Rural associations have had a difficult time in linking up with another to affect government agriculture policy. Most of the rural groups which have escaped intervention from the state have remained fragmented and intermittent. There are several reasons why collective action in the countryside has proven even more difficult than in urban areas. First, African governments have sought to dominate rural associations in an autocratic and bureaucratic manner -- thus undermining local initiatives. Second, the relative self-sufficiency through subsistence agriculture of African peasants has provided them with the option of exiting from state efforts at control. Finally, the relative isolation of African peasants in small family based agricultural units makes collective action more difficult. As Robert Bates argues, small scale producers are less likely to organize into collective associations to put pressure on government than large scale producers. Consequently, rural association tend to remain tied to traditional allegiances rather than becoming effective interest group bodies. However, as Hamer points out, despite government intervention, there are cases of relatively effective rural cooperatives. What is needed is a more concentrated effort to improve how rural associations cooperate with each other. This

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[25] John H. Hammer, "Preconditions and Limits in the Formation of Associations: The Self-Help and Cooperative Movement in Sub-Saharan Africa," African Studies Review, Vol. XXIV, No. 1 (March 1981).

[26] Ibid., pp. 120-121.

[27] Ibid., p. 124.

can be done partly through the building up of national agricultural bodies and connecting them to locally -- village -- grounded associations.[28]

Conclusion

What are the policy implications of all of this? The emergence of associations at all levels of African society, both rural and urban, is essential if an African civil society is to develop as a counter-weight to an overbearing, yet ineffective, state. As Landell-Mills states, "by empowering groups throughout society to both voice their concerns and take direct action to achieve their ends, the trend is strongly in favor of more participatory politics, greater public accountability, and hence basic democracy."[29] The ability of African associations to coordinate among themselves and to have an impact on policy is, in part, dependent on the types of resources available to them. Clearly, external donors can only play a limited role in the mobilization of these resources; however, by targeting these resources towards enhancing how associations interact with one another and their impact on "distributional" issues, outside donors can contribute to the strengthening of civil society.

In the short and medium term, the policy impact of strengthening African associational life will probably be a limited one. Helping to contribute to the emergence of a civil society and a civic tradition in Africa is not an immediately measurable phenomenon. Since a qualitative dimension is involved, a quantitative analysis of how many associations exist and what they do is only part of the picture. Nevertheless, a network of horizontally linked associations and a diffused civic tradition are probably the *sine qua non* for sustaining long-term economic and social development on the continent. As Robert Putnam points out in his society of associational life in Italy, associations play a pivotal role in sustaining an enabling environment of social exchange and trust that is grounded in a set of explicit and implicit rules. In such an environment, individuals are more likely to trust one another and because of this trust they are more likely to engage in collective endeavors.[30] More importantly for the African context, a sustained associational environment will contribute to the weakening of vertical ties -- notably patron-client ones -- which generate asymmetrical relationships based on exploitation and corruption. The point is not that exploitation and corruption will disappear from the African environment, but that a network of associations are more likely to generate a positive norm of reciprocity that can at least limit opportunism and corruption. A dense network of horizontal associations -- that is, a network of agents of equivalent status and power[31] -- is more likely than vertical ties to contribute to overcoming many of the problems of sub-optimization that is so characteristic of the African environment.

As far as an effective policy agenda is concerned, what is needed is the allocation of resources in such a way that they reinforce horizontal ties across various associations. International development agencies can contribute to this process in a variety of ways. First, they can contribute by identifying sectors of

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[28] On this issue, Sithembiso Nyoni, "Indigenous NGOs: Liberation, Self-reliance and Development," World Development Vol 15, Supplement (1987): 51-56.

[29] Landell-Mills, op. cit., p. 563.

[30] Robert D. Putnam, Making Democracy: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993), pp. 171-172.

[31] Ibid., p. 173.

society in which they would like to see the development of a more autonomous network of associations. Second, once these sectors have been identified, international development agencies, can seek to enhance their internal and external organizational capacity by providing them with material resources -- such as money, vehicles, copying machines, workshops of leadership skills and communication, and by reinforcing their ties with transnational associations of a similar nature. Finally, international agencies can help reinforce norms of reciprocity and accountability in the way in which they interact with these associations. By seeking to establish a more equitable relationship based on trust and shared objectives rather than a vertical one based on dependency of international development agencies.

Activating Civil Society in Africa
Session IV

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As Dwayne Woods views it, Africa's civil societies must be strengthened for multiple and somewhat contradictory purposes: to sustain "an enabling environment of social exchange and trust that is grounded in a set of explicit and implicit rules" (the facilitating dimension), and "to develop as a counter-weight to ... overbearing, yet ineffective state[s]" (the impeding dimension).[1] The connecting thread that links these facilitating and impeding thrusts is the encouragement of democratic regimes, reflecting the emphasis of these regimes upon such values as broad public participation, equality among the citizenry, party and associational competition, high information, and governmental transparency and accountability.[2] Assuming that a vibrant associational life will further these democratic values, how can civil society (that is, the "segment of society that interacts with the state, influences the state, and yet is distinct from the state") be activated and empowered in contemporary Africa?[3]

The Functional Roles of a Strong Civil Society

To start with, it is important to note that the state itself benefits in practical ways through interaction with a hardy civil society. Such an integration of state and associational groups promotes a kind of lock-in on the part of these associations. This lock-in encourages mutual adjustment and joint problem-solving while at the same time counteracting a destructive anarchy, military coups, uprisings, warlordism, or secessionist activities. Rather than stressing the role of civil society as a deterrent, it highlights the dimension of reinforcement, for overlaps emerge between conflict and cooperation. Emphasizing the intertwining of state-civil society interactions, Victor Azarya concludes that "the essence of civil society is a sense of reciprocal obligations and expectations that prevail among groups in society;" such reciprocity reinforces links between them, for it involves "a commitment to take part in the establishment of a common order and a voluntary compliance to abide by its rules."[4] Patterns of regularized

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[1] Dwayne Woods, "The Vertical and Horizontal Dimensions to Associational Politics in Sub-Saharan Africa," a paper presented at the USAID-hosted workshop on "Civil Society, Democracy and Development in Africa," Washington, DC, June 9-10, 1994, pp. 20-21.

[2] On the characteristics of democratic and other regime forms, see Donald Rothchild, "Structuring State-Society Relation in Africa: Toward an Enabling Political Environment," in Jennifer A. Widner (ed), Economic Change and Political Liberalization in Sub-Saharan Africa, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994), pp. 208-223.

[3] Naomi Chazan, "Africa's Democratic Challenge," World Policy Journal 8, (Spring 1992): 281.

[4] Victor Azarya, "Civil Society and Disengagement in Africa," in John W. Harbeson, Donald Rothchild and Naomi Chazan (eds), Civil Society and the State in Africa (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1994), p. 91.

interaction, then, represent the glue that links state and civil society -- and sets the foundations for an enabling political environment.

This intertwining of state and civil society acts to strengthen state capacity in a variety of ways. For one thin, the state is more in touch with the public, and therefore gains access to much needed information about civil society's demands and expectations. By establishing routines for predictable relations, democratic regimes (broadly conceived) are in a position to know more fully what people want and what they are planning. For another thin, a close proximity between state and society increases the likelihood that the state will be more responsive to legitimate associational demands. A more responsive state is likely to accept the need for state accountability and transparency. Finally, a closeness between state and civil society may bring a greater understanding, even empathy, toward the difficulties encountered by the other. For example, an appreciation of the problems that state elite faces may lead to restraints on societal demands -- even if only in the short run. Conflict and cooperation are not necessarily polar opposites in the state-civil society encounter. These reinforcing relationships may enhance state capacity, reducing societal suspicions and alienation, and enabling members of the informed public to concentrate on the developmental tasks at hand. A related problem is the manner in which these overlaps can also result in a strengthening of associational life in the African context.

Structuring Societal Incentives

In brief, the problem we face can be formulated as follows: how, in largely agricultural societies with clientelistic patterns and weak state institutions, can the state organize incentives so as to encourage the development of strong and constructive civil societies? As noted above, the robust and responsive state needs to be complemented by a strong civil society in order to accomplish its tasks. Although it takes an enlightened sense of self-interest to expect the dominant state coalition to encourage the very groups which may thwart its leadership on some particular issue later on, this is a paradox of the democratic transition that must be dealt with openly.

The emergence of a vibrant and broad-based civil society is inevitably a lengthy process in Africa and other second and third world contexts. With communications poor and small farmer interests difficult to organize, politics has often proceeded according to patron-client norms rather than the formation of well-organized and articulate interest groups. Colonial regimes gave some interest organizations (for example, cooperatives and political parties) encouragement, but by and large most associational groups grew spontaneously, reflecting a broad array of citizen concerns over economic, political and social issues. A somewhat exceptional involvement by the state in promoting a controlled form of African corporatism took place in the 1970s and 1980s in Côte d'Ivoire, where former president Houphouet-Boigny incorporated a variety of interests (ethnic associations, social organizations and economic interest groups) into the Parti Démocratique de Côte d'Ivoire (PDCI). In the Côte d'Ivoire version of state corporatism, civil society was broadened, but the political space accorded these groups remained circumscribed. And true to the model of state corporatism, those groups regarded as hostile to the ruling coalition were refused the right to participate in the political process.[5] But the Côte d'Ivoire case was an exceptional one -- for a relatively strong state was able to structure its relations with its civil society. In other, less organized situations, civil society remains more voluntaristic and spontaneous, but no more

[5] Donald Rothchild and Letitia Lawson, "The Interactions Between State and Civil Society in Africa: From Deadlock to New Routines," in John W. Harbeson, Donald Rothchild, and Naomi Chazan (eds), Civil Society and the State in Africa (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1994), p. 267.

able to play an effective role as facilitator or impeder. This creates grave problems in terms of developing a balance between participation and stability. In the extreme case of Somalia, where political institutionalization is weak, various religious, traditional, professional and other interests are present on the current scene and could come to represent a liberalizing and stabilizing force for cross-cutting ties.[6] However, the international community would have to display greater determination about nurturing civil associations than it has shown thus far, or what Hussein Adam describes as clanism will continue to be "solidly rooted in popular aspirations" and thwart the establishment of a dynamic equilibrium.[7]

Under today's circumstances, international pressure can and does make economic assistance contingent on further measures of democratization. External donors, as Dwayne Woods notes, can contribute to strengthening Africa's civil societies by targeting "resources towards enhancing how associations interact with one another and their impact on 'distributional' issues."[8] But there are limits to such interventions and they can have perverse effects. African regimes are likely to remain wary of such external initiatives, even where well-intended, primarily because the outcomes of such policies open up the process of political liberalization and thereby enable new sets of elites to emerge. As a consequence, the international community, which is gradually disengaging from the African scene, has limited space for maneuver. The effect is to leave the African state, by default, with the primary responsibility for activating and empowering civil society.

Certain requisites are essential if the state is to allow civil society to play a significant role. First, the state must remain cohesive in order to be in a position to establish the rules for regularized relations within civil society and between itself and that segment of the larger society. Second, where civil society is prepared to play by the prescribed rules, it should be able to expect state responsiveness in return (an implicit bargain). And third, that political institutions be in place to create some form of democratic order over time. As noted above, the way that institutions structure societal interactions can prove critical in determining participation, inclusion, proportionality, fairness and other outcomes. One hopes that a learning process will materialize, leading to the acceptance of a polyarchical order sometime in the future. As Adam Przeworski puts it:

> Democracy is consolidated when it becomes self-enforcing, that is, when all the relevant political forces find it best to continue to submit their interests and values to the uncertain interplay of the institutions. Complying with the current outcome, even if it is a defeat, and directing all actions within the institutional framework is better for the relevant political forces than trying to subvert democracy.[9]

Civil Society and the Use of Incentives

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[6] Samuel P. Huntington, Political Order in Changing Societies (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968), p. 402.

[7] Hussein M. Adam, "Somalia: Militarism, Warlordism or Democracy?" Review of African Political Economy, No. 54 (1992): 13.

[8] Woods, "Civil Society ...," p. 20.

[9] Adam Przeworski, Democracy and the Market (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p. 26.

Certainly, a critical aspect in the promotion of self-enforcing democracies is the encouragement of vibrant civil societies. Alert and active associations are indispensable to sustaining meaningful social exchange relations that are in accordance with the established rules and to ensure that the state elite itself abides by the agreed-upon norms. The implicit bargain requires that a strong state coexist with a strong civil society. But how are the routines for predictable behavior to emerge? This is an extremely complicated subject that deserves a much fuller analysis than is possible in this context. Even so, four points emerge from the discussion presented thus far.

First, the empowerment of civil society reflects increased political learning over time. The relations between state and civil society are anything but static, but require repeated negotiation and re-negotiation of the rules of relationship. As civil associations augment available information and the state becomes increasingly responsive to legitimate demands, a pragmatic relationship is likely to lead to greater openness. What is essential is to go beyond the survival of democracy to learned rules on competition, inclusiveness, proportionality and responsiveness; these practices continue because it is in the interests of all the players to abide by the rules of the game. In time, democratic state forms gain a kind of self-reinforcement and legitimacy, as stable rules of relationship emerge and gain broad acceptance.

Second, the African state has an important role to play in activating civil society. In a reasonably open and democratic context, one can expect that civil associations will emerge spontaneously, much as they have done in the past. But the kind of rule regulated order in which the state interacts on a regular basis with societal groups is one that inevitably involves the state itself. For the international community to make a regular practice of bypassing the state to empower civil society as against the state is self-defeating. Such practices can create needless suspicions and can undercut predictable, ongoing patterns of relationship. What is needed is to adopt a more encompassing and dynamic approach, emphasizing what connects and reinforces the links between state and civil society -- and not what divides them.

Third, it is important to recognize that institutions matter in the shaping of incentives. In the francophone African countries, the legal code enabled the government to determine which association was legitimate and which not. Such authorization acted as a disincentive because the minister of interior could decide whether a party or organization was a legitimate one.[10] In the present period, regimes have opened up somewhat, allowing greater scope for participation by associations in the economic and political lives of their countries. In this sense, democracy itself provides the overarching incentive for the activation and empowerment of civil society. Within this wide framework, it is important to keep in mind that democratic regimes organize relations by establishing power-sharing mechanisms, recognizing the equality of their citizens, allowing organized interests to carve out space for themselves, allocating resources according to the principle of proportionality, and so forth. The effect is to encourage or discourage the manner in which civil society can function and can relate to the state itself.

Fourth, it is critically important for outsiders to accept the fact that democratic regimes vary among themselves and that these differences affect relations between state and civil society significantly. Clearly, there are degrees of autonomy, inclusiveness, proportionality and consolidation. Societies can exist for a long period of time with regimes that are not fully consolidated. What is important for our purposes is their performance in establishing routines for predictable behavior and in organizing incentives to strengthen the role of their civic organizations. The state has a broad array of incentives -- positive and negative -- that can be employed to promote the organization of interests and the representation of interest

[10] I am grateful to Pearl Robinson for these comments.

group spokespersons within ruling elite circles. Insofar as the dominant state elite is moving toward democratic principles broadly conceived, they deserve the support of the international community.

Conclusions: The Implications for USAID

While accepting Dwayne Woods' point that "international donor groups can enhance the enabling capacity of African associations by helping to create a space for influencing government actions," I would place far greater emphasis on the broader interactional process at work. Civic associations do need greater political space to be effective in their informing and policymaking tasks, but a more conscious linkage between the impeding and facilitating roles of civil society are important. The African state deserves support wherever it acts responsively and helps to shape the context for cooperative interaction. The state can play an indispensable role in shaping incentives for active associational participation. Provided political liberalization is occurring, a state that is encouraging reciprocal obligations and predictable, recurring norms of interaction between itself and civil society deserves international backing.

CIVIL SOCIETY, DEMOCRACY AND DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA

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ANNEX 4

CIVIL SOCIETY IN BOTSWANA: A DEVELOPMENTAL VIEW

by

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THE DEMOCRACY RESEARCH PROJECT

The University of Botswana founded The Democracy Research Project in 1986 to mobilize faculty to engage in research, education and consulting related to the development of democracy in Botswana. The Project has published a number of monographs, articles and one book on democracy in Botswana. It has also held numerous workshops, seminars and conferences for professional politicians and others involved with politics in Botswana. Staff from the Project are currently undertaking a study of the 1994 elections and a study of civil society which builds on this essay.

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The authors are particularly appreciative of the time which our interviewees took from their busy schedules to talk with Democracy Project members about group life in Botswana. The dialogue sparked by the questions often lasted three to four hours.

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Introduction

Democratization of African states has brought increasing attention to the need for strengthening civil society. Analysts argue that an invigorated civil society will provide the structural base for competitive elections. Civil society articulates a variety of points of view, finances diverse political activities, and defends citizens against government arbitrary action. It also acts as a channel by which citizens receive information about and resources from government. In so doing civil society is a critical connection between citizen lives and government activities.[11] The broader the range of groups represented in civil society, the greater the extent of the population which has a contact with and voice in government.

That a pervasive civil society exists in most developed countries and that this civil society is critical to the operation of liberal democracy is generally accepted. To be sure there is much concern about its bias toward the upper classes and dominant ethnic groups. In the African context, many scholars argue civil society cannot be sufficiently strengthened to play a critical role in the democratic systems being established. These pessimistic scholars reach this conclusion from a number of different perspectives. In so far as the supporting analyses are compelling, members of civil society groups and their foreign aid supporters must think of changing or limiting their long term goals or strategies relative to democratization of African societies.

One pessimist analysis comes from those who focus on African culture. They argue that powerful traditions impede the development of civil society. The specific tradition may vary. Some perceive that pervasive patrimonial relations immobilize groups as representatives of their members. Others assert that ethnic identities reduce economic and moral issues to insignificance and thus obviate the need for any form of political activity not promoting these identities. Still others contend that authoritarian social structures have persisted since precolonial times and allow little public space for groups to form and no basis for maintaining a representative leadership. (Bratton, 1994; Lemarchand, 1992; Lewis 1992).

A second thesis regarding the weakness of African civil society is that governments constrict the formation of autonomous groups. Some governments imprison leaders who seek to organize citizens independent of state structures. More often, African governments use their massive resources to coopt civil society through laws which limit freedom of association, financial inducements of various kinds and political rewards. At best civil society is emasculated by a corporatism where groups leaders ratify the demands of government elites (Bratton, 1994; Chazan, 1993).[12]

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[11] Civil society can also afford citizens the option of producing collective goods by other means than through politics and state. Since this essay focuses on civil society as a base for democracy, this additional aspect of civil society is not under consideration. See Tripp, 1994 for an examination of non-political civil society in Africa.

[12] A few like Callaghy (1994) argue that civil society should not be promoted because it could undermine an already weak African state. His argument is based on the idea that economic development must be given priority over democratization. This relationship is not relevant to this essay.

Dependency theorists have put forth a third pessimist argument. It is that foreign governments an organizations have launched and sustained much of modern African civil society. From this view European and North American policy makers have grown disappointed with the failure of Africa governments to follow their development designs for a capitalist Africa. Thus they have channeled thei funds to non-government organizations which they perceive as much easier to manipulate. The result ha been a "recolonization process." (African World Review, 1994)

Class analysts argue that civil society requires the development of an economy which can both provid groups with sufficient resources to exercise influence vis-a-vis the state and sustain the necessary pluralit required for multiparty politics. Most African economies lack the necessary economic growth. Instead they have suffered two decades of decline. The growth which has taken place has tended to be in th state sector. Thus most of the beneficiaries have been heavily dependent on the state and cannot b expected to take autonomous action as the middle classes have done in Europe and North America i promoting democratization (Lewis, 1992; and Nyang'oro, 1994).

Political sociologists contend that groups do not obtain power without organization (Michels, 1915). I African societies in the last half of the twentieth century group leaders have not had the time to develo the structures required to mobilize their membership to influence civil servants and politicians. Thi entails centralized controls over finances, careful analysis of interests, and effective communication wit members and political elites. The social learning required to do this will take a number of decades t succeed (Woods, 1992).

These pessimistic reviews of African civil society have two general problems. First, the analyses hav a static perspective. They emphasize the present condition of civil society in one or more African states, often highlighting its ineffectiveness compared to the role of civil society in a developed country. Th pesssimists overlook the extent to which African civil societies have been in a process of developmen in response to changes in the economy or the state. Second, the pessimists put forward analyses an theories derived from explorations of authoritarian and one-party states which have heretofore prevailed in Africa. Even where democracies are considered, their life spans have been short and their stability tenuous. Thus the arguments presented by the pessimists cannot answer the question of whethe democratization will increase the possibility that viable civil societies can provide a firm foundation fo multi-party politics.

Since few African states have had a sustained democratic experience, the only option for studying the relationship of democracy and the development of civil society in Africa is through a case study.[13] The best case is Botswana, and thus it is the focus of this paper. This southern African state has had a developing economy and an emerging democracy for three uninterrupted decades.

Botswana became independent from Great Britain in 1965. It has subsequently enjoyed competitive elections every five years. The Botswana Democratic Party, first led by Seretse Khama until his death in 1980 and by Ketumile Masire subsequently, has won every election by decided margins (60-70%). The party system can best be described as one-party dominant. The two main opposition parties have political and legal freedom to pursue voters but have yet to show the capacity to organize effectively

[13] This is not withstanding the weakness of the case study method of research. See for example Yin, 1994 and Babbie, 1994

outside of the cities and several minority ethnic areas. In the last decade the transparency of the government has been enhanced by three private newspapers which have critically reported on failed policies, corruption and political conflicts. Helping to sustain the stability of this system is the fact that since the early seventies the economy has developed at a rapid pace. Government has managed its expanding resource fairly efficiently relative to other African states and has provided a wide array of social programs for the population.

The thesis to be developed in this essay is that Botswana's civil society remains weak relative to the state, but it has been gaining in strength, especially in recent years. This development has involved major cultural change, intense political conflicts, substantial foreign aid assistance, continued enlargement of the economy, and gradual development of organizational capacity. Significant development remains. Most important, civil society in Botswana has yet to become engaged in the political party competition which occurs at election time. This will only occur when the party structure shifts from being one party dominant to competitive.

The discussion which follows first details the data used for analysis and then examines each of the five pessimist arguments: African culture, government constraint, foreign influence, the need for economic growth, and organizational weakness. The conclusion concentrates on the developmental nature of Botswana civil society with respect to each of the pessimist perspectives.

Data

In July and August of 1991, the Democracy and Research Project of the University of Botswana gathered the data to be examined in this paper. Members of the project interviewed the primary leaders of eighteen of the most prominent groups which were at that time active in organizing the local population for collective action. A few important groups were not included because of problems in obtaining an interview from the appropriate leader. Among the groups not interviewed were the Botswana Council of Women, Botswana Society, and the Forestry Association. While each would certainly add some variety to the subsequent analysis, the existing sample provides a good picture of the development and current contours of Botswana's civil society. The table below lists the groups from which leaders were interviewed and the section of society organized.[14]

Issue/Charity	Professional	Urban Income	Agriculture
Botswana Council of Churches	Botswana Confederation of Commerce, Industry & Manpower	Botswana Federation of Trade Unions	Botswana Millers Association

[14] Under the Societies Act, all organized groups must register with the Registrar of Societies. In 1994, the Registrar stated there were 1045 groups so registered. Of these 787 were churches, burial societies, and sports groups. We did not sample these groups because they have no explicit political purpose. Eleven others were political parties. Our sample thus is from the 248 others. From this 248 the Project selected those groups with the larger memberships, some contact with government, and the larger budgets.

Young Women's Christian Association	Botswana Civil Servants Association	Gaborone Taxi and Bus Association	Barolong Farmers Association
Kalahari Conservation Society	Botswana Teachers Union	Botswana Bank Employees Union	Ghanzi Farmers Association
Ministers Fraternal	Nurses Association	Botswana Mine Workers Union	
Emang Basadi		Botswana Meat Workers Union	
Red Cross			

The questionnaire focused on nine topics: origin of groups, their organization, policy concerns, access by leaders and members to government and political parties, strategies used to influence government and political parties, institutional constraints on political activity, attributes of mass membership, international connections, and attitudes of leader being interviewed towards politics. Sixty-three questions were asked, most involving a closed question followed by opportunity for an open-ended explanation.

On the basis of a review of the responses of the eighteen group leaders, Project staff formulated a twenty-two question interview for political and government elites and identified a small group of respondents who appeared to have most contact with civil society groups. The persons interviewed were: Deputy Permanent Secretary for Commerce and Industry, Permanent Secretary for Works and Communication, Commissioner of Labor, Permanent Secretary for Education, a specially elected Botswana Democratic Party[15] Member of Parliament, and the leader of the BNF and an MP from Gaborone (the capital).

Members of the Democracy Research Project have continued to follow the activities of the groups in our sample since the 1991 interviews. Members were involved particularly in research related to the union and issues/charity sectors. In addition, Project staff have monitored newspapers and various reports related to group activity in Botswana. Two of the authors have participated in the activities of three of the groups in the sample.[16]

African Culture and Group Development

Three aspects of culture will be addressed in this section: traditional and colonial culture, contemporary internal group norms, and relations between state and society.

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[15] The BDP is the government party in Botswana. Its main opposition is the Botswana National Front (BNF).

[16] Gloria Somolekae is on the Executive Council of Emang Basadi. Patrick Molutsi is a member of the Barolong Farmers Association and the Botswana Mill Owners Association.

A. Traditional and Colonial Culture

In precolonial Tswana society, citizens were represented to the chief largely through elders who spoke for their extended families. Given the homogenous character of citizen interests, this approach was congruent with the economy. The only other major form of organization was on the basis of age groups and communities. However, both were led by persons dependent on the chief for their authority (Schapera, 1955).

The situation did not change much under colonial rule in that government perceived the chiefs and headmen as the primary spokesmen for the Tswana population, even incorporating them in an advisory council at one point. A small number of groups did form including Botswana Teachers Union (1937), Botswana Civil Servants Association (1941), the Red Cross (1948) and YWCA (1962) from our sample. The first two formed because the members felt discriminated against by European colleagues and the colonial government. The latter came into existence to deal with crises of drought and poverty in the rural areas. By independence these four groups gave legitimacy to the idea in Tswana politics and culture that groups could be formed to protect against discrimination and to meet crises for which there was a need for collective action. Most of the remaining groups in our sample built on this tradition. They formed to counter discrimination which they perceived they were experiencing (usually employment but also gender discrimination) or there was a crisis (the KCS perceives an environmental crisis). All the groups we examined sought their legitimacy in the success they had achieved in dealing with the discrimination or crises which stimulated their formation.

One enduring aspect of Tswana culture may facilitate the founding of women's and youth groups. Both are perceived traditionally as lower in status than adult men. Thus when women or youth form organizations which engage in charitable (e.g. Red Cross or YWCA) or sports activities, they are seen as continuing to perform a subservient role in the community. However, if women and youth organize to change their status, e.g. as Emang Basadi has done, the group is perceived by many in the population, especially adult males, as highly deviant and threatening.

B. Internal Group Culture

For the most part, internal group culture in Botswana arises from the modernization of the last thirty years. This culture has a democratic character relative to significant aspects of policy and leadership selection. All groups hold annual general meetings. On occasion a year will be skipped. These meetings either involve all members or in larger organizations delegates elected from the various branches. At these meetings, the main order of business is the election of officers. All have a president, vice-president, secretary and treasurer. Often additional officials are elected to the executive committee to represent regions or various functional committees. From time to time, the AGM replaces the old leadership.[17]

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[17] The Societies Act requires that all organized groups register with the Registrar of Societies. The Registrar among other things requires submission of a constitution. It is not likely that a society will be approved if it does not follow the general democratic patterns described in this paragraph. Among the organizations sampled, the norms reflected in these patterns are generally accepted as not only legal but the preferred way to run an organization.

In a number of cases group leaders remain in office for a long time. Such organizations as the Red Cross, the YWCA, the BCC, and until recently the Nurses Association have had the same leader for well over ten years. In time, a cult of the personality develops, and elections have little impact. Members tend to become alienated and drift away from group activities. In a few cases, elections have finally toppled those who have stayed in power too long, as in the case of the Nurses Association. Another response to prolonged leadership is the formation of competing groups. The ease with which groups can be formed in Botswana makes this possible. Thus, the BTU is now confronted by three new groups representing elementary, secondary and college teachers. After much soul searching it has begun to reconsider its overall mission.[18]

There is also evidence that executive committees expect to exercise control over their staff. In the more active groups the executive committee meets as much as once a month. The median number of meetings in our sample was three a year. The reason for this small number is that committee members must travel a considerable distance given the country's size (Botswana is the size of France). In groups with no staff, the executive committee must carry out policy implementation itself. Where a staff exists, the executive committee seems to have a final say in policy making and in some cases, especially where there are functional committees, does some of the policy formulation (most especially the KCS, Emang Basadi, and BCC).

C. Relations of State and Society

While civil society in Botswana has some democratic qualities as far as leadership selection and policy making, the connection of groups with the state presents a much more ambivalent picture. Respondents in both our samples were agreed on the following points:

- It is considered legitimate for a group to collect information relative to government policies and their adverse effects on a segment of society, and to present reports to members and the public for discussion.

- It is acceptable to contact politicians and civil servants and inform them about group concerns.

- Civil society groups can welcome the participation of politicians and top civil servants in their organizations.

To undertake more aggressive influence measures is likely to undermine a group's credibility for many outside its organization. Only four of the group leaders in our sample of eighteen believed it was acceptable to threaten to mobilize group members to vote against politicians who would not support group interests. Only two leaders said they would support politicians who were helpful to the organization, e.g. urge their election in public or give them campaign funds. However, thinking on intervention in election politics is evolving. When we conducted our interview with Emang Basadi in 1991, its leader stated that their organization would not help women politicians who were fighting for women's issues. As the election approached in 1994 the leadership changed its mind. The group held a two day seminar for

[18] The leaders of the BTU and its competitors have not agreed yet on a new approach; however the BTU does realize it has lost touch.

women interested in running for office. In addition, it organized a wide range of women's groups to write a manifesto for the 1994 elections. Entitled Women's Manifesto: A Summary of Botswana Women's Issues and Demands, it challenged all political parties in the forthcoming election to adopt positions favorable to women on a series of policy questions. The impact of these activities has been significant. The BDP and BNF felt compelled to address women's issues for the first time in their own election manifestos. Candidates at speeches in freedom squares[19] were also supporting Emang's demands.

In Botswana, group hesitation to become involved politically can be most striking. The leaders of the BFTU have twice debated in the last decade whether to become more involved politically in elections. Both times they decided not to do so. The issue is likely to be brought up again. Even lesser forms of involvement do not take place. Thus, the Botswana Mine Workers Union has an annual income which is over a million of Pula,[20] clearly enough to flex its muscles in the political arena. Yet, the union has not hired a policy analyst, even on a consultant basis, to work on its collective bargaining and political interests.[21] At the same time, the leaders have risked a considerable amount of its funds to construct a large building for rental income. The union also owns one-third of the shares in Mmegi, a private newspaper in Botswana, but it has not insisted that the newspaper devote a portion of its space to labor news and advocacy.

Our sample of top civil servants and politicians also rejected the idea that groups should get involved in election politics, other than to encourage people to vote. Dr. Koma, the leader of the opposition Botswana National Front, would be the most likely to see the need for organized groups to support political parties. He said he preferred that citizens support parties as individuals. Civil servants are not as casual. Any group working openly with a political party is in fact acting like a political party. Thus, to keep the division between politics and administration clear, civil servants believe it is best that contacts with such "political" groups be reduced as much as possible. For civil servants, organized groups have lost their "mandate" to represent their members when they associate with political parties.

Certain other forms of political influence are generally considered taboo. Thus, the only group leaders approving of strikes are from unions, and even unions have yet to continue a work stoppage much beyond a week. Only one group in our sample had organized a demonstration in recent years; another was thinking about it. But, on the whole demonstrations are looked upon as too risky in terms of public perception. Politicians and civil servants (with the exception of the Opposition leader) as a group oppose strikes and demonstrations except when no agreement can be reached in prolonged discussions. Civil

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[19] Freedom squares are places in a village or city where Botswana politicians address public rallies.

[20] In recent years the value of the Pula has been around $00.38 to $00.36.

[21] An observer of the 1994 negotiations between the Mine Workers and Debaswana stated that the union's positions were often very poorly developed and poorly presented. The union tends to rely on its counterpart in South Africa, the National Mineworkers Union, for much of its technical information related to bargaining.

servants are most opposed. They even regard demonstrations as political activity and thus another way in which groups abandon their mandate.

D. Summary

The cultural argument is that African beliefs prevent civil society from becoming an effective control on government. Botswana's experience indicates the hypothesis is only partially true. Within the modernization process a democratic culture is developing to govern group policy making and leadership selection. Also, it is legitimate for groups to make a reasoned public presentation of member grievances relative to the state. However, aggressive political action, including strikes, demonstrations or even involvement in election campaigns, is considered taboo. This means that groups have a limited mandate as far as protecting citizens against the state: They can talk but they have few options when it comes to action.

This limited mandate is slowly expanding. Emang Basadi organized the writing of a manifesto for the 1994 elections which challenged the political parties to respond to women's issues. It is also training female candidates from all parties. However, it is still fearful of actually supporting candidates in the election. Unions have begun to debate whether they should take a more active role in elections. While they have not answered in the affirmative, they are likely to continue to debate this issue, especially as the impact of Emang's new moves become apparent.

Government Constraint

The discussion which follows concentrates on three aspects of government intervention in group affairs: legal, financial and political.

A. The Legal Context

The Botswana government appears to have taken a rather benign attitude toward the development of groups. As long as they fulfill specific conditions in the Societies Act, new groups can register. They must have a constitution, elect their leaders on a regular basis, and show that they can keep records and manage their finances and property. The problem is that the Registrar of Societies requires considerable institutionalization as evidence that the conditions of the law have been met, e.g. capacity to keep accounts and record of meetings. This is not easy for groups with no literate members. On religious groups the Registrar is even tougher requiring that they show they have at least one member with a school certificate and another who holds a theological certificate. Evangelical churches in Botswana, with some justification, see the Registrar's interpretation of the Societies Act as prejudicial to their continued growth. On the other hand, literate groups have little problem with the Act.

Unions in Botswana face particularly significant legal barriers.[22] The Constitution under Section 13 (2) specifically excludes unions from enjoying the civil rights and freedoms guaranteed to individual persons. The Trade Union and Employers Organization Act of 1983 makes it very difficult for unions to realize

[22] The rationale for this policy was very explicitly articulated to the trade unions in a speech by Sir Seretse Khama at the first BFTU conference on April 2, 1977. He stated that "free collective bargaining ... can have potentially drastic repercussion on ... Botswana." See Carter and Morgan, pp. 325-330.

the legal conditions for a strike. There has only been one legal strike subsequently. Moreover, there is nothing in the law which requires companies to reveal financial information to a union with which it is involved in collective bargaining, a requirement which is minimal for serious negotiation. Under the Public Service Act public officials are forbidden from joining a union. Government manual workers have recently been incorporated under this act. In terms of ILO conventions, Botswana is very conservative. The government has only ratified two conventions, both formulated in the 1920's.
Constant criticism of government's position on all these matters has brought some rethinking. Industrial courts have been established to facilitate speedy legal resolution of labor disputes. The Labour Commissioner has proposed a major liberalization of 1983 Trade Unions and Employers Act. The Minister of Commerce toured the major industrial centers in the country in 1993 urging workers to join unions.[23]

B. The Financial Context

After groups are launched, government generally will provide support for those activities which a particular ministry desires. Thus the Red Cross helps the Ministry of Health on health education and blood donor programs. It provides volunteers for drought relief programs. BTU receives funds from the Ministry of Education to run sports and music competitions. Emang Basadi conducts various women's education programs which are supported by government. In other cases, government seeks foreign aid for such groups as BOCCIM and the BFTU to undertake training programs for their members.[24] In all cases, government's attitude toward group subsidies is not that they are rewards for good behavior but rather that this funding is for performing required services. Nevertheless, groups are cautious not to antagonize top ministry officials too much.

C. The Political Context

The prevailing view among civil servants, politicians and group leaders is that civil society groups should make contact with the civil servants rather than politicians when members have a problem with government. As the Labor Commissioner put it, the job of a politician is to "receive and direct people" to the proper civil servants. He told his minister on at least one occasion to direct his fellow politicians not to raise expectations but only to act as a facilitator of approaches to his department. For the most part, civil servants like to deal with organized Batswana[25] through umbrella organizations, or even better through advisory boards which include both group leaders and a number of ministry representatives. They prefer to be advised on general attitudes of groups toward the implementation of policy. They

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[23] For a more extended discussion of the relations between the trade unions and government in Botswana, see Molutsi, Mogalakwe and Mufune, 1993 and Molokome, 1989.

[24] President Khama actively promoted the BFTU's founding. His concern was that the trade union movement was becoming polarized between the BDP and the BNF. He hoped that the BFTU would focus unions on matters of collective bargaining and exclude politics. He sought funds from foreign and international labor organizations to launch this umbrella organization.

[25] Batswana is a plural noun referring to the people of Botswana.

refuse for the most part to contact group leaders on their views on a policy which is being developed. In effect, civil servants have institutionally shielded themselves from all but formal contacts with civil society.

There are some exceptions to this defensive posture when a ministry sees itself as having a common policy orientation with an organized group. Thus KCS perceives the Wildlife Department as working with it for most environmental objectives. BOCCIM tends to look to the Ministry of Commerce as its supporter on privatization matters. For most groups the situation is very different. They are at odds with a government ministry in a given policy realm, and they are almost totally excluded from policy discussions with civil servants. The BTU feels frustrated by the Ministry of Education at almost every turn; the Nurses Association receives almost no recognition at the Ministry of Health; the unions look upon the Commissioner of Labor as no advocate of their interests; and the Permanent Secretary for Home Affairs refuses to meet with "noisy" women's groups like Emang Basadi .

If a group does not want to be locked out of the policy process, it must at a minimum have the capacity to undertake policy research and make convincing proposals. Most of the organizations examined in this study did little more than make demands. As will be demonstrated later in this study, this is because they have not developed the capacity to conduct policy research.

Politicians generally accept the view that they should help groups find the appropriate civil servants for dealing with the problem being presented. They would rather not get involved in conflicts between a ministry and an organized group. The only exception being if the party has a policy which explicitly supports the group's demands. Politicians also do not want government to fund groups other than to provide services.

Politicians do not seek support from specific organizations during political campaigns. However, they do recruit leaders of civil society organizations as individuals into party positions or nominate them as candidates for office. The parties also create internal organizations to represent specific sectors of society. The major parties have women's and youth organizations. The BNF proposes to go much further and establish sections of the party dealing with the professions, wage labor and farming. In sum, politicians do not court interest group support but rather invite leaders of such groups to join their party to show that it is concerned with a particular segment of the population.

D. Summary

The argument examined in this section is that African governments try to suppress and coopt civil society groups. In Botswana, government erects some legal barriers to group formation, especially for the illiterate and trade unions. It also engages in cooption in the sense that a number of groups are heavily dependent on government subsidies to maintain their organizations. Even more serious politicians and civil servants attempt to induce civil society groups to limit their contacts with government to matters of policy implementation and to eschew policy development, unless a group is prepared to provide a full blown proposal. On the other hand, groups are free to organize and criticize government. Many groups perform extensive services for their members or the community using public funds. Finally, Government is coming to realize that it must do more to support the trade union movement through liberalization of constraining laws.

Foreign Influence

This section focuses on the character of foreign influence on civil society and the extent of dependence created.

A. The Character of Foreign Contact

Almost all of the eighteen groups in the sample being studied claimed to have little foreign assistance in their founding. Thirteen said they had no assistance from outside the country, and most claimed to have no foreign founding members. This would seem to indicate that outside leverage was not critical in their launching. However, there were some substantial exceptions. While most trade unions came into existence with little or no foreign help, the BFTU has from the beginning been almost totally financed by foreign sources, including its staff and building in Gaborone. Most of the other groups with strong foreign assistance in their founding were explicitly cooperative ventures between Batswana and Europeans. Thus the British Red Cross helped with the founding of the Botswana Red Cross. Members of the South African YWCA brought the organization to Botswana. And, Anglo-American Corporation from South Africa helped both BOCCIM and the KCS with financing and offices in their early years.

All the organizations mentioned in the previous paragraph have if anything become more dependent on foreign assistance. Over one-quarter of the Red Cross income comes from overseas organizations and expatriate businesses. Almost all the YWCA projects are foreign supported, which is most of its budget. Half of the BOCCIM budget comes from foreign donors for particular training and development projects. A contraction of foreign funding for such groups has had devastating consequences. The Afro-American Labor Centre decided to transfer its programs from Botswana to South Africa. As a result BFTU has become almost totally dependent for funding on the Mine Workers Union, the only Botswana union with substantial dues income. It has recently closed its main offices in Gaborone as well as most of its programs and now operates out of Seliebe-Phikwe, far from its other member organizations.

Other groups which have started with their own resources have become heavily dependent on foreign funds. Emang Basadi has obtained aid funds for most of its projects, including its candidate and political education workshops and the research related to developing and writing the Women's Manifesto. BCC receives much of its funding and many of its staff from overseas churches. The main organizations without significant foreign support are professional groups (Nurses Association, Teachers Union, Civil Servants Association), urban income groups (all the unions, except BFTU, and the Taxi Association) and one moral/issue group (Ministers Fraternal).

Botswana's civil society has also been influenced by the development of civil society in surrounding African states. The founders of many of the country's unions first learned about worker mobilization as migratory laborers in South Africa and Zimbabwe. Women's organizations in Botswana are in regular contact with their counterparts in surrounding countries as to policy and strategy questions. Recently, the leading role played by the South African unions in the ending of apartheid has made Botswana unions leaders aware that they could take a much more aggressive political stance.

B. The Extent of Dependence

A complete withdrawal of foreign assistance would shrink Botswana's civil society considerably and leave it much more focused on union and professional groups. The organizations now heavily dependent on foreign funding would probably only survive in their service activities where they could secure

government funding. This would markedly reduce their autonomy relative to government. In addition, foreign aid organizations have often funded civil society groups to undertake policy oriented research. The product has often been proposals for government action on a wide range of health, professional and human rights matters. These initiatives would also cease.

Group leaders in Botswana attempt to keep their public image very separate from that of their foreign donors, especially on domestic political issues. For instance, in regard to discrimination against minorities (especially the Bushmen), many human rights oriented groups dissociate themselves from foreign criticism of government policies. In other cases, the situation is more complex. Thus, the KCS usually does not publicly evidence any association with international environmental groups when the latter make demands on the Botswana government. In private much more cooperation takes place with regard to positions taken. Likewise, BOCCIM makes contact with foreign consultants to be certain they are well advised on and supportive of employer interests. The unions always urge ILO visitors to pressure Botswana to subscribe to its various treaties and covenants. But, all this cooperation between foreign organizations and local civil society groups is done with great concern for the reputation of the organization. Aid is not taken in exchange for adopting the policy position of a given donor. As one leader said, public association with the policy concerns of foreign groups can cause serious "credibility" damage.

The state constraint argument assumes that there is a harmonious relation between local groups and foreign interests. In fact, many civil society groups seek state protection from foreign companies. To an extraordinary degree the Botswana government has subjected the local economy to foreign competition in the form of everything from South African hyper discount chains to highly efficient Chinese construction firms which are winning most public sector contracts.[26] Protests from the unions and BOCCIM have been to no avail, even during an election year. The government is intent on keeping the economy competitive.

C. Summary

The foreign influence argument receives some confirmation. Foreign organizations choose to fund certain civil society activities. At a minimum they determine which goals of organized groups will receive member attention. They also fund certain groups like the churches, Red Cross and BOCCIM to the exclusion of others like professional organizations and urban income groups. They are thus involved in shaping civil society in Botswana.

On the other hand, this foreign influence has some benefits. In many cases, foreign agencies give civil society groups opportunities they would never have had on their own, or with government's help. In Botswana, this diversity is particularly important in bringing forth moral and issue based organizations as well as charity groups. Civil society in surrounding countries has been a source of ideas for the development of Tswana groups. The foreign influence argument is also questionable in that Botswana civil society finds itself opposed to foreign corporations which receive considerable support from government. In this regard, it is civil society which seeks to limit foreign influence. Finally, groups in Botswana's civil society serve to limit foreign influences on some policy issues since they are cautious

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[26] Chinese construction companies won 79 percent of the value of building tenders between April and August 1994, as reported in the Botswana Gazette, September 14, 1994, p. 1.

to support positions of aid groups unless the local group can represent itself as supporting domestic interests.

The danger of foreign aid support in Botswana would seem to be twofold. First, local groups have not worked to develop their own independent sources of funding. The result is that aid organizations are creating an artificial civil society unless a permanent financial base is established. Second, foreign aid organizations fund groups and projects which fit into European and North American views of the proper development agenda for Africa. It would appear however that funding such activities at least diversifies the range of Botswana's civil society. In this sense it offers a very powerful African state some competition for popular support, which in the case of Botswana is much needed.

Economic Development and its Impact on Groups

This section examines the extent to which economic growth has made some sectors of civil society self-financing and the income base of those groups not affected by the growth process.

A. Self-financing Groups

Botswana has experienced one of the world's highest economic growth rates over the last three decades. Indeed, from 1975 to 1991 the country's GDP grew at a real rate of 10 percent per annum. Korea was the closest competitor at 8.8 percent for the same period. (Ministry of Finance, 1994: 42). Most of the growth has been in the mining, government, and urban commercial and manufacturing sectors.

The groups which have grown mostly from their own resources, i.e. they have not required substantial government or foreign financing, are located in the sectors which have experienced the most economic growth. In terms of the categories used in this study, all are professional and urban income groups. The only groups in these two categories which significantly rely on foreign funds are BOCCIM and the BFTU. The former is not a serious exception in that it has raised substantial funds on its own. The BFTU's financial plight is more a consequence of the reluctance of individual unions to finance the creation of a strong umbrella organization, rather than that the union movement as a whole lacks sufficient funds.

The impact of economic development is also evident in the proportion of potential members mobilized. The Mine Workers say they have enrolled almost 7,000 out of 10,000 workers in their sector. The BTU has 5,000 teachers out of a total of 12,000. The BCSA represents 3,400 out of 12,000 permanent and pensionable government officers. The Mill Owners Association includes 52 out of 60 such businesses. Even the Taxi and Bus Owners Association in Gaborone claims to have 160 out of a pool of 250. In most other groups outside of the professional and urban income category, the mobilization of potential members is less substantial. In a number of cases most of the members are in the capital city of Gaborone.

Three of the four professional groups which are self-financing are in the government sector (i.e. Nurses Association, Civil Servants Association, and the Teachers Union). Without question, they are limited in their effectiveness by the fact that they are government employees. More than other groups in Botswana, these groups are hesitant to contact politicians because of the regulations affecting involvement in politics. All have a difficult time negotiating with those at the top of the civil service. Each group's leaders recognize that too militant a stand could jeopardize their personal careers. In addition, they are legally not able to strike, thus limiting this avenue of influence.

B. Non-Self-Financing

The long term prospects for low growth sectors of the Botswana economy are much less promising. In agriculture, there has been little growth, in spite of government efforts to increase production. Farmer organizations are very weak in that the number of commercial producers is small and the income they can spare to sustain their organizations is minimal.[27] They either exist on very small budgets or require outside support. The situation is equally bleak for charitable and issue-oriented organizations. Almost all of their funding comes from government and foreign sources. Groups like the Red Cross, Emang Basadi and the YWCA obtain no more than one percent of their income from members. Many of their members do not even pay their annual fee.

C. Summary

Economic development in Botswana has yet to create a middle class strata which is willing and able to fund effective civil society groups. Almost all of the middle class groups which are self-financing are timid ones based in the government sector. BOCCIM which is an umbrella business association is the one possible exception. However, most of its income comes from expatriate companies which are the biggest employers. BOCCIM does have a majority of Tswana members. It would thus seem that entrepreneurs are the only element of the Botswana middle class which is willing to fund civil society, but this interest does not extend to issue or charitable groups. Otherwise, where economic growth has served to expand civil society is in the urban income groups, mostly unions in our sample. These groups have emerged in spite of government attempts to limit their effectiveness as collective bargaining units. Thus it appears that with the exception of BOCCIM, economic growth thus far is largely related to the expansion of unions in civil society.

The implications for other African states of this Botswana experience are substantial. Since Botswana has enjoyed sustained economic growth for well over twenty years, it would appear that African states which have remained relatively stagnant in economic terms face little prospect of creating a middle class base for their civil societies. To be sure, the Botswana case may be somewhat extreme in that the country has a small population spread over a large land area. One would expect that in countries with a larger population and smaller size, the degree of economic development needed to create a middle class foundation for civil society will be somewhat less.

Organizational Underdevelopment

This section will examine the organizational problems of civil society groups and then identify the approaches being used by Botswana groups which are effective in influencing government.

A. Problems of Group Organization in Civil Society

Botswana's civil society has many organizational problems which render it weak relative to the state. One-third of the groups in the sample ceased to exist at one time or another. Others teeter on the brink

[27] The Mill Owners Association is exceptional in that it has mobilized so large a portion of their potential membership. It has received considerable funds from foreign sources. African Development Fund is currently providing Pula 300,000 over three years for various services.

of non-existence. Members do not pay dues. Leaders do not organize meetings, or if they do call a meeting, those assigned to make reports do not attend. In half the cases in the sample, dues are too low to afford to pay staff and rent, thus the elected leadership must perform staff functions as well. Contacts with government and political leaders take place on an ad hoc basis. No person or group is charged with making regular contacts. At best a leading politician or government official is invited to the AGM. No serious committee work or research is devoted to studying problems of concern to group members or examining possible policy solutions.

In this context of minimal institutionalization, internal conflicts and indecision relative to political action easily become immobilizing, particularly when the principle leaders are located in various parts of the country. Also, mismanaged finances can further undermine the group's capacity to conduct its affairs. The resulting disorganization minimizes group credibility with politicians and civil servants.

B. Groups Organized for Political Influence

A few groups are exceptions to the foregoing generalizations. Most prominent are BOCCIM, KCS, Emang Basadi, Red Cross, YWCA, and BCC. The strategies which they use are very similar. All spend considerable time gathering information and producing reports on issues of concern to them. They are often better prepared than the government agencies with which they are dealing. Generally foreign aid organizations finance the data gathering and analysis required for position papers. The group then hires consultants to do the work or in some cases uses its own members to do the job.

In the case of a major influence activity, such as proposing a piece of legislation or a new program, these six policy-oriented groups usually hold a national conference on the subject involved where they will invite their membership, several international consultants, and the most influential politicians and civil servants concerned with the issue. The conferences are by no means neutral venues where all views are discussed. Rather, most of the speakers have a particular solution in mind. For instance, under UNDP sponsorship, BOCCIM held two conferences in 1988 and 1991 promoting privatization. Government has implemented most of the recommendations coming from these meetings. The KCS has held or encouraged a number of conferences on conservation, wildlife and tourism which have resulted in both new laws and changes in policy.

The six influential groups gain access to government officials in a number of ways. Some groups like the YWCA and the Red Cross appoint a prominent government official to their board to be their spokesperson with government. The latter even brings in military leaders. Others, most particularly BOCCIM and KCA, use prominent private citizens on their board to contact government officials. All four of these groups have staff who are in constant contact with mid-level civil servants. The BCC has members of its Social Concerns Committee meet with the appropriate cabinet minister or even the President on matters of concern to the mainline churches. Emang Basadi, being somewhat radical in its feminist concerns, tends to deal with a few supportive members of Parliament and otherwise works through informal contacts.

All these organizations seek media attention for their proposals in order to mobilize public support. They also broaden their mass following through umbrella organizations. Particularly prominent are an environmental coalition in which KCS plays a major role and a human rights group in which Emang Basadi plays a leading role. BOCCIM and the Mill Owners are involved in starting a small business coalition. More loosely knit networking systems are also beginning to appear in other policy areas. For instance, women's groups regardless of their political orientations have formed a network to fight a move

on the part of conservative Parliamentarians to hold a referendum on a citizenship issue affecting women married to foreigners. The resulting activity seems to have been successful.

All of these organizations which have a political impact have changed their organizational purpose at one time or the other in order to gain increased leverage on government. BOCCIM has broadened from an employers organization to become a chamber of commerce as well. It thus increased its base in the private sector among Batswana. The Red Cross, YWCA and the BCC have moved from groups concerned with poverty to a focus on development, since more funding is available from government and foreign aid groups for this latter purpose. Emang Basadi at first focused on legal issues of concern to women. Now it is working on helping women become more active politically, including running for office. The change has brought it more money, staff, members and public attention.

Individual trade unions are becoming better organized in terms of their internal structures. They are raising their dues to support full time staff. In the case of the Mine Workers this income is considerable. But as of yet none of the unions has put their funds into serious policy oriented research. The result is that in the bureaucratic policy making environment of Botswana they are not prepared to present well reasoned defenses of their demands. The BFTU compounds the situation in that its finances have been totally dependent on foreign aid organizations whose mission is to promote trade union education. In so doing, they eschew any support for political action.

One important aspect of group attempts to influence government in Botswana is that very little organizational effort is directed at influencing parties and the outcomes of elections. While cultural factors work against such activity, there is also a matter of political realism involved. As long as Botswana remains a one-party dominant system, groups have little to gain by supporting the ruling party or the opposition. Everyone knows that organized groups will have little impact on the election. The opposition has continued to gain a larger portion of the vote in each election since the 1970s. By the end of the century, the opposition could have a chance of winning. At that point, civil society groups could organize members to vote, and in so doing determine the winner. Particularly critical in this case are the unions which have their members concentrated in a few constituencies.

C. Summary

Civil society in Botswana is bifurcated. Most groups are not well organized to undertake influence activities. Their finances are minimal, and they are not inclined to use funds they have for organized political action. More important they lack an intellectual membership which can develop the position papers necessary to persuade the government bureaucracy. On the other hand, a small number of groups have organized themselves for political action. They have prepared themselves for dealing with the needs of bureaucracy for information and detailed policy recommendations. In addition, they organize conferences focused on their needs and maintain regular contacts with civil servants and politicians. In short, the argument that African groups have not yet organized themselves to influence government is not sustained for a number of cases in Botswana.

The organizational weakness thesis does have some truth. Most of the groups examined in this study lack the organizational resources to influence government. As a result, politicians and state bureaucrats look at such groups as without political creditability. In addition, the absence of a competitive party system renders all groups unable to intervene in the electoral process as a way of increasing their impact on the political elite.

A Developmental Perspective

The foregoing essay examines the arguments of the civil society pessimists with regard to Botswana, the only sustained democratic political system in Africa. In all sections their perspective was given some credence. Culture and government do constrain the development of groups. Foreign aid supports certain organizations and objectives over others. Economic growth has not provided the resources yet to sustain issue-oriented and charitable organizations, and most groups in Botswana cannot organize themselves to have an effective influence on government.

The problem with the various pessimist perspectives is that they tend to be static. If civil society is looked at from a developmental perspective, as in the foregoing discussion of Botswana, it is possible to be more optimistic. When the Democracy Research Project reported on its initial field work in 1987-88, project staff emphasized the weakness of civil society. Few citizens indicated that they were active in groups. Most of the groups that did exist were concentrating on their survival and only beginning to explore ways and means to influence government. Many organizations charged no more than P6 per year for dues. Payment was haphazard. Most groups had no staff. Those that did only had a few. Government or foreign funding was minimal. At best civil society in Botswana at this time could be described as nascent (Holm and Molutsi, 1989; Molutsi and Holm, 1991).

The development in the intervening years has been significant. A much more viable civil society is emerging. Dues are increasing in amount, particularly in the union movement. There are more organizations with a staff, and the number of staff members has increased. Group policy reports and conferences are increasing in their influence on government decision making. Some of this information initiative is for the first time coming from groups in which Batswana clearly set the agenda and implement the decisions. In addition, groups have formed umbrella organizations and networks to promote objectives of joint interest. Civil servants have begun to feel more comfortable with group influence activities in so far as the bureaucracy is the focus of attention and groups minimize "political party" contacts.

Foreign aid organizations have played a critical role in this process. They have pumped large sums of money into developing the infrastructure and programs of groups in Botswana's civil society. The various policy proposals and training programs would not have happened without this infusion. However, it is wrong to conclude that money is the only factor. Also, important are the skills, time and energy of a significant element of the middle class. It is they who can write proposals for funding, supervise staff, and spend long hours designing and carrying out conferences where members and government officials discuss policy issues.

That civil society has enhanced Botswana's democracy is without question. More voices are now heard in the policy process on a regular basis. They include various women's organizations, religious groups, unions, Tswana businessmen, and various professional groups. Private newspapers have added to the process by amplifying the messages of these groups to the broader public. Political parties are beginning to listen and incorporate group agendas in their election programs.

Two questions stand out with respect to the development of civil society in Botswana: 1) Can the foreign funded groups become self-financing? 2) Will foreign aid organizations and government continue to subsidize Botswana's civil society in the meantime? It is very possible that the answer to both questions will be negative. There does not appear to be much planning for reduced aid funds on the part of local or foreign organizations. A dialogue should start now since North American and European governments

can change their priorities with respect to developing countries rapidly. Very little reflection on this issue is taking place, let alone actual organizational initiatives. One exception is USAID and BOCCIM where the latter is looking at ways to do without the former. This will be easier than for most other groups in that BOCCIM already raises half its budget on its own.

Gaining self-sufficiency requires that civil society groups demonstrate that they can deliver worthwhile returns to their members from the state. To do this, organized groups may need to increase their access to the political parts of the policy process. Over the last eight years the politization issue has emerged on the agenda of a number of groups. Emang Basadi has moved closer by training women for political action and publishing its own agenda. The unions are talking about making an endorsement of a political party. The middle class groups can probably maintain policy influence through their present approach of feeding policy reports to the bureaucracy. Other organizations representing low income groups may lead the way in adopting a political posture because of their exclusion by the government bureaucracy. Thus far the BDP and top civil servants have refused even to entertain this possibility.

If the party system were to become more competitive and the opposition had a chance of coming to power, civil society groups could reap real gains from choosing sides in the electoral process. Their support could help the opposition win for the first time, and for this they could demand political access for their concerns. In the meantime, the civil servants may continue to determine which groups in civil society participate in government policy making. Thus, the next major advance in civil society influence over government may require that Botswana's elections become more democratic. In this regard civil society will only expand in its role when the party system and the elections themselves become more democratic.

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ANNEX 5

CIVIL SOCIETY DEFINITIONS & TYPOLOGIES:

A POSTER WALK

conducted by:

Dr. Kenneth Kusterer
American University

Civil Society

A STRUCTURAL/FUNCTIONAL AND CONTINGENCY CONCEPTION

DEFINITION: A sphere of social interaction between the household and the institutions of formal government which is characterized by voluntary associations, and the pursuit of interests through the norms of community cooperation.

ACTORS IN CIVIL SOCIETY

1. NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS:

    a. voluntary membership
    b. autonomy and independence
    c. self-governance
    d. non-profit distributing associations
    e. formalized with legal recognition and status

2. PRIMARY ASSOCIATIONS:

    a. localized
    b. non-formalized structure with no legal recognition

3. FOR PROFIT VOLUNTARY ASSOCIATIONS:

a. profit generation
b. distribution of profits to principles

Civic Domain

CIVIC ACTION:

one form of social interaction attempting to produce norms of civic community (trust, reciprocity, tolerance, inclusion) and which enhances participation in self-governance or governance of state institutions

THE DOMAIN:

a process not performed by a single type of association, institution or organization

CIVIC ACTION LOCUS:

cutting across public/private usually:

- **specialized civic organizations**
- **multipurpose NGOs including political parties**
- **private for profit associations**
- **public institutions**
- **the media when they pursue civic action as all or part of their activity**

Civic Organizations

A CONTINGENCY STRUCTURAL/FUNCTIONAL DEFINTION[28]

DEFINITION: A civic organization is an NGO which has as one of its primary missions the conduct of civic action.

TYPOLOGY

a. Multipurpose NGOs:

Membership Support Organizations
Religious Bodies
Grassroots Support Organizations

b. Specialized NGOs:

Civic Organizations
Non-Profit Centers and Institutes
Autonomous Public Organizations
Specialized Consortia and Networks
Media Organizations

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[28] From "An Assessment of USAID's Capacity for Rapid Response in Support of African Civil Society," Washington, DC: ARD, Inc. Typology developed by Leslie Fox.

The Classical Sociological Classifications System for Voluntary Organizations

	"Modern" or secular	"Traditional" based on religion or ethnicity
Affinity Groups	Sports clubs, hobbyists, social clubs.	Lodges, orders, carnival bands.
Civic Associations	Service clubs, self-help groups, community associations, volunteer orgs, business and professional organizations, unions.	Church-based service or charity organizations, ethnic mutual benefit societies. Benefit societies.
Political Associations	Interest groups, constituency groups, advocacy groups, citizen lobbies.	Advocacy groups based on ethnic or religious status, rights groups for religious or ethnic minorities.