Crafting Democracy

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Civil Society in Post-Transition Honduras

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To Björn

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Lund, February 2003
Caroline Boussard

List of Acronyms

AFL-CIO	American Federation of Labor – Congress of Industrial Organizations
AIFLD	American Institute for Free Labor Development
AMHON	Asociación de Municipios de Honduras
ANACH	Asociación Nacional de Campesinos de Honduras
ASONOG	Asociación de Organismos No Gubernamentales de Honduras
CACM	Central American Common Market
CAS	Centroamérica Solidaria
CCIC	Cámara de Comercio e Industrias de Cortés
CCIT	Cámara de Comercio e Industrias de Tegucigalpa
CDM	Centro de Derechos de Mujeres
CEB	Comunidades Eclesiales de Base
CEDOH	Centro de Documentación de Honduras
CG	Consultative Group
CGT	Confederación General de Trabajadores
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CIPRODEH	Centro de Investigación y Promoción de los Derechos Humanos
CNTC	Central Nacional de Trabajadores del Campo
COCOCH	Consejo Coordinador de Organizaciones Campesinas de Honduras
CODEH	Comité para la Defensa de los Derechos Humanos de Honduras
CODEM	Consejo de Desarrollo Municipal
COFADEH	Comité de Familiares de Desaparecidos de Honduras
COHEP	Consejo Hondureño de la Empresa Privada
COIPRODEN	Coordinadora de Instituciones Privadas Pro los Niños, Niñas y sus Derechos
CONACIN	Consejo Nacional de Seguridad Interior
CONADI	Corporación Nacional de Desarrollo Industrial
CONSUFFAA	Consejo Superior de las Fuerzas Armadas
COPECO	Comisión Permanente de Contingencias
COPIN	Comité de las Organizaciones Populares de Intibuca
COPINH	Consejo Cívico de Organizaciones Populares e Indígenas de Honduras
CREM	Centro Regional de Entrenamiento Militar
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CTH	Confederación de Trabajadores Hondureños

DIC	División de Investigaciones Criminales
DNI	Dirección Nacional de Investigaciones
ECLA	Economic Commission for Latin America
EU	European Union
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation
FECORAH	Federación de Cooperativas de la Reforma Agraria
FEHMUC	Federación Hondureña de Mujeres Campesinas
FENACH	Federación Nacional de Campesinos de Honduras
FENAGH	Federación Nacional de Agricultores y Ganaderos de Honduras
FHIS	Fondo Hondureño de Inversion Social
FMLH	Frente Morazanista para la Liberación de Honduras
FMLN	Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional
FONAC	Foro de Convergencia Nacional
FOPRIDEH	Federación de Organizaciones Privadas de Desarollo de Honduras
FOSEDH	Foro Social de Deuda Externa y Desarrollo de Honduras
FPR-LZ	Fuerzas Populares Revolucionarias "Lorenzo Zelaya"
FSLN	Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional
FUSEP	Fuerza de Seguridad Pública
GNP	Gross National Product
GNI	Gross National Income
HIPC	Heavily Indebted Poor Country
HONDUTEL	Empresa Hondureña de Telecomunicaciones
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
IHNFA	Instituto Hondureño de la Niñez y de la Familia
IHSS	Instituto Hondureño de Seguridad Social
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INA	Instituto Nacional Agrario
IPM	Instituto de Previsión Militar
MCCP	Movimiento Cívico Cristiano y Popular para la Derogación del Servicio Militar Obligatorio
MNR	Movimiento Nacional Reformista
MPLC	Movimiento Popular de Liberación Cinchoneros
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OAS	Organization of American States
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
ORIT	Organización Regional Interamericana del Trabajo
OXFAM	Oxford Committee for Famine Relief
PARLACEN	Parlamento Centroamericano
PCH	Partido Comunista de Honduras
PDCH	Partido Demócrata Cristiano de Honduras
PINU	Partido de Innovación Nacional y Unidad

PL	Partido Liberal
PMRTN	Plan Maestro para la Reconstrucción y Transformación Nacional
PN	Partido Nacional
PND	Plan Nacional de Desarrollo
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
PUD	Partido de Unificación Democrática
RDS-HN	Red de Desarrollo Sostenible de Honduras
RNP	Registro Nacional de las Personas
SAP	Structural Adjustment Program
Sida	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SIF	Social Investment Fund
SITRAFRUCO	Sindicato de Trabajadores de Standard Fruit Company
SITRATERCO	Sindicato de Trabajadores de Tela Railroad Company
TNE	Tribunal Nacional de Elecciones
UFCO	United Fruit Company
UN	United Nations
UNAH	Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Honduras
UNC	Unión Nacional de Campesinos
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNITEC	Universidad Tecnológica Centroamericana
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WB	World Bank

Chapter One

Introduction

Seven months after hurricane Mitch hit the Central American isthmus with devastating consequences in 1998, the governments of Central America and the international donor community gathered in Stockholm for a Consultative Group (CG) meeting on "Reconstruction and Transformation of Central America".[1] At the meeting, the Central American governments and the donor community alike expressed their firm commitment to rebuild—not the same—but a new and better Central America. In a spirit of mutual agreement, the CG meeting was concluded with the unanimous adoption of a joint declaration. One of the principles of the so-called Stockholm Declaration, which is supposed to guide the reconstruction and transformation of the region, states as an important aim to:

> Consolidate democracy and good governance, reinforcing the process of decentralization of governmental functions and powers, *with the active participation of civil society* (Consultative Group, *The Stockholm Declaration*,1999, italics added).

The intentions of the Stockholm Declaration were taken seriously—at least in the official rhetoric. When the Honduran delegation, headed by President Carlos Flores, returned to Honduras after the meeting, the government established a Civil Society Participation Commission (Comisión de Participación de la Sociedad Civil). The task of the Commission, as stated by the government, was to function as an advisory body to the President and to oversee the implementation of the reconstruction plan. However, about nine months later, when the Consultative Group arranged a follow-up meeting in Tegucigalpa, the umbrella organization Foro Ciudadano left the Commission on the grounds that their suggestions of a political-institutional reform—including a reform of the judicial

system and the electoral system—was counteracted by other parties in the Commission and ignored by Flores' government. Apparently, despite the promises given at the Stockholm meeting, Flores never had the intention of taking the principle of active participation of civil society seriously.

This brief account raises several important questions for our understanding of civil society and its function in a democratization process. Why does a civil society organization demand a far-reaching political-institutional reform, only a few years after the transition to democracy was completed? Why do the World Bank and bilateral donors promote civil society participation in the reconstruction process? Why does a government decide to create a commission for civil society participation and then later ignore its suggestions concerning democratic reforms? These questions illustrate the complexity of civil society involvement in the democratization process. Against this background, this study sets out to analyze civil society's potential democracy-building functions, and the conditions under which civil society is likely to contribute to democratic development.

Many countries, particularly in what we commonly refer to as the Third World, have embarked upon a transition to democracy.[2] Some countries have successfully completed the transition and inaugurated democratically elected leaders. Other countries have never completed the transition and remain in the gray zone between democracy and authoritarianism. Out of all the cases of transition in the so-called "third wave of democratization" (Huntington 1991) several countries have ended up, not as full-fledged democracies, but rather as democracies with a prefix indicating the deficits of the democratic regime, such as pseudo-democracy, semi-democracy or hybrid democracy (see e.g. Schedler 2002; Carothers 2002).[3] It has therefore been argued that the third wave of democratization had more breadth than depth (Diamond 1997: xv). A number of the new democratic regimes that emerged from this globally spread political change are confronted with problems that could pose a threat to a newly established democracy. In several such post-transition societies we witness manipulated elections, military prerogatives, increasing violence and weak political institutions (see e.g. Diamond et al. 1999: 1-2). Moreover, many newly established democracies are challenged by low support for the democratic system (e.g. Lagos 1997).

Typically, post-transition development is less dramatic than the actual transition to democracy. A transition to democracy is likely to be an emotional event and engage the formerly repressed population. Evidently, a dramatic event like this is also likely to receive widespread media coverage. The nature of post-transition problems is not equally dramatic, and accordingly they do not attract the same media interest. But a transition does not mean that democracy is secured. Earlier "waves of democratization" have resulted in reverse waves back to authoritarian rule (Huntington 1991).[4] Thus, a new democracy faces the challenge of moving forward towards a well-functioning political system that is perceived as legitimate among both the political elite and the broader mass public (Diamond 1999: 64). In cases like these, it is political crafting that can make the difference between survival and breakdown of a democratic regime (Linz & Stepan 1989: 41). No country is doomed to remain a poorly institutionalized, low performing democracy that enjoys low support among its citizens. But, in cases like these, the task of crafting democracy is more urgent (Di Palma 1990: 9).

Who, then, are the actors that could craft democracy? The answer is not unequivocal. One could think of several different actors—political parties, civil servants and politicians—that could contribute in the process of crafting democracy. However, in this study, we will focus on one particular actor—civil society. A considerable part of the literature on democratization emphasizes civil society's democracy-building potential. The conviction of civil society's importance in the democratization process is, however, not restricted to the academic literature. It has also had an immense impact on the policy sector. The World Bank, and many bilateral donors—among those the USA and the Scandinavian countries—have included support for civil society in their democracy-promoting policies (see e.g. Carothers & Ottaway 2000). As of today, support to civil societies is considered as an important element for promoting democracy and human rights (SOU 2001:96: 274). It should, of course, be noted that civil society's democracy-promoting potential has been questioned, and that there have been objections against the whole idea of civil society as an actor in the democratization process. Critics such as Chris Allen have argued that the idea of strengthening civil society is part of a neo-liberal project (1997).[5]

The Research Problem

The past two decades have demonstrated a global swing to democracy. The exact number of new democracies is, of course, dependent on how one defines democracy. But, just to give an idea of the global trend of democratization, in 1980, 32 percent of the countries were rated as Free by the Freedom House survey, 32 percent were rated as Partly Free and 36 percent of the countries were rated as Not Free. According to Freedom House's survey in the year 2000, 44 percent of the countries were rated as Free, 31 percent as Partly Free and 25 percent as Not Free (Piano & Puddington 2001: 87; Diamond 1996: 20; Johansson 2002: 28). Some of the new democracies have prior democratic experience and others have almost no democratic traditions at all. This group of new democracies is dispersed over Africa, Asia, Latin America, and East and Central Europe and constitutes a highly disparate collection of states (see e.g. Collier & Levitsky 1997: 430). Some have experienced military rule, others have a tradition of totalitarian Communist rule. Some have become democratic through elite negotiations within the regime, others through international pressure.

Notwithstanding the differences, many of the new democracies have two things in common. First, they are far from being what is commonly referred to as "consolidated" democracies. The problems are of different kinds; whereas some regimes still have difficulties with the most fundamental principles of democracy, others struggle with the same difficulties that challenge the old democracies, e.g. low trust in politicians and declining levels of participation. Second, given the fact that many of the newly established democracies are aid recipients, and that support for civil society has become one of the most important ways of promoting democracy in the Third World, civil society aid will probably affect democratic development in these countries.

Departing from these general observations, this study sets out to analyze civil society and democratic development in post-transition societies. The concept of civil society here refers to all the voluntarily formed non-profit collectivities that seek to promote or to protect an interest and that are part neither of the state nor of the family sphere. Civil society is regarded as an important factor in the democratization process for two reasons. First, it is generally assumed that civil society contributes to democratic development by generating democratic values or fostering civic education among the citizens, thereby

supporting the regime. Second, it is assumed that civil society acts as a countervailing power and limits state power and thereby contributes to democratic development (see e.g. Foley & Edwards 1996). Unfortunately, the assumption of civil society's democracy-building potential is sometimes based upon an idea of civil society as something inherently virtuous or supportive of democracy. In addition, there has also been a tendency to study civil society almost in a vacuum, without paying sufficient attention to surrounding structures such as the political context—particularly the role of the state—and the external dimension in terms of donor influence.

Aims of the Study

As indicated above, this is a study of civil society in the post-transition period. More precisely, the study aims at furthering the understanding of the democratic difficulties that many post-transition societies deal with, and how civil society can contribute to democratic development. The main research question guiding this study is: *How can we understand civil society's democracy-building functions in post-transitional societies?* One purpose of the study is to develop existing analytical tools in order to enhance our understanding of civil society's democracy-building functions. Drawing on theories of democratization and theories of civil society, a conceptual framework is outlined in an attempt to contribute to our understanding of how and under which conditions civil society contributes to democratic development. This, however, also implies an understanding of the kinds of democratic problems with which many post-transition societies are confronted.

The case examined in this study is post-transitional Honduras. Located on the conflict-ridden Central American isthmus, the country returned to civilian rule in 1980 after a long period of civil-military authoritarian rule. Paradoxically, with the transition human rights abuses increased and Honduras became a highly militarized state. The 1980s are therefore often referred to as "the lost decade". It was not until the mid-1990s that a demilitarization of the country took place. This small Central American country provides a clear illustration of post-transitional difficulties. After the civil-military relations were altered, Honduras seemed to be heading towards a more stable democracy, but was still constrained by widespread

disillusion among the population, prevalent corruption and weak rule of law. Low levels of economic development did not ease the precarious situation. Honduras was—after Nicaragua—the poorest country in the region.

As if this was not bad enough, hurricane Mitch almost devastated the country in late 1998. Hurricanes are not unusual in the region; in 1974, hurricane Fifi caused tremendous devastation. But Mitch was worse. Mitch destroyed bridges, wiped out crops, destroyed houses, and killed thousands of people. Prior to the disaster, Honduras had been an unknown and isolated republic on the Central American isthmus, and seemed to attract interest only because of US foreign policy in the region. Honduran territory was used for Contras' attacks on the Sandinista regime in Nicaragua. Hurricane Mitch created a completely new situation: the international donor community suddenly showed interest in the country. Thus, the more empirical purpose of this study is to gain better understanding of the democratic process in Honduras and if and how civil society has contributed to democratic development.

Contributions of the Study

Much has been written on democracy, democratization and civil society. In the 1980s the sub-discipline of consolidation studies emerged, concerned with the continuity of democracy in transitional societies. It was within consolidation studies that the civil society factor gained prominence. Civil society was singled out as one of the most important democracy-strengthening factors in the post-transition period. However, as indicated above, it is critical to avoid simplification and glorification of civil society. The concept can be a useful analytical tool only if we avoid romanticizing or idealizing it, or abstracting it from its historical roots (Fine 1997: 8). For scholars as well as for practitioners in the field of democracy promotion, it is crucial to examine under what circumstances civil society may be favorable to democratic development. Civil society is complex and sometimes also plays contradictory roles.

In order to be able to understand civil society's complex relation to democracy, three features must be addressed: the political context, the external influence and the internal structure of civil society organizations.

Surprisingly, the political context, particularly the role of the state and its relationship with civil society but also civil society's linkages to other political actors such as political parties, has not been given much attention within democratization studies. Traditionally, it has been the state-centric perspective on civil society, based on the Hegelian tradition with an interest in the expansion of the state, that has focused on the political context, whereas democratization studies have shown more interest in the society-centered (liberal) perspective on civil society (Lewis 1992). However, in order to understand civil society's potential democracy-building functions, the political context must be taken into consideration (e.g. Berman 1997; Foley & Edwards 1996; Dryzek 1996). This study advances a conceptual framework that recognizes the importance of the political context. What role civil society may be able to play is strongly dependent on the state, particularly the strategies of the governing elite. Without sufficient attention to the surrounding political structures, civil society's democracy-building potential cannot be understood.

In addition, civil society is, within democratization studies, often regarded as a domestic affair. Even though it became more acknowledged by the end of the 1980s that there was an international dimension of democratization that had to be taken into consideration (e.g. Schmitter 1996; Whitehead 1996; Pridham 1991), civil society was still regarded as mainly a domestic phenomenon. However, as civil society became a major recipient of, and an important channel for, development aid, a more policy-oriented literature emerged, emphasizing the impact of development assistance on civil society's role in development and democratization (e.g. Edwards & Hulme (eds.) 1996; Tvedt 1998; Clayton (ed.) 1996; Ottaway & Carothers (eds.) 2000; Eade (ed.) 2000; Howell & Pearce 2001). This literature, which has been referred to as the "NGO literature" because of its emphasis on development NGOs, did what democratization studies had not done: it considered the external factor.[6] Therefore, this study makes use of both the traditional literature on civil society and democratization and the "NGO literature". Bridging the gap between the more academic democratization studies and the more policy-oriented NGO literature seems to be a rewarding strategy to include the external dimension into the analysis.

Finally, civil society has sometimes, especially in the literature concerned with development of social capital, been treated as something intrinsically pro-democratic and advantageous for democratic development (e.g. Putnam 1993; 1995). This study argues that the composition and the internal structure of civil society are crucial for our understanding of how civil society may contribute to democratic development. A civil society that is compounded of organizations with un-democratic goals and methods, and with internal authoritarian structures, is not likely to contribute to democratic development by functioning as "schools for democracy", as suggested by Alexis de Tocqueville (Diamond 1999; see also Brysk 2000; Warren 2001; Stubbergaard 1998). However, it may still have a democracy-building function by being a countervailing power to the state.

Taking the political context, the external dimension and civil society's internal structures into consideration, this study outlines a conceptual framework that helps us understand how, and under which conditions, civil society can contribute to democratic development. Jan Scholte provides a comparable approach, although he is concerned with civil society and democracy for global governance (2002). It is important to emphasize that what is arrived at here is only a framework that has proven to be helpful in understanding the Honduran case. Whether it is applicable to other cases is beyond the ambitions of this study. But given the fact that the post-transitional problems in Honduras are not unique, it seems likely that the framework could be applied with success to other post-transition societies in the Third World as well.

On the empirical level, the aim of this study is to contribute to an increased understanding of a typical new democracy—Honduras—and the democratic challenges the country confronts. Before hurricane Mitch struck in late 1998, Honduras was unknown to most people:

> Honduras is the Tibet of Central America. It has no Indian community, like that of Guatemala, to attract the romantic anthropologist, nor does it present for the political observer the Lilliputian charms of El Salvador. Few major studies of its government and society have been done in the last 30 years. As a result, even those close to the scene,

> such as the officers who wander through the labyrinthine U.S. embassy, are reduced to a series of clichés, most of which are inexact and some of which are entirely off the mark (Anderson 1988: 165).

The political literature on Honduras is limited.[7] Typically, many anthologies on political development in Central America do not include the case of Honduras. If included, it is often used as a point of comparison with the other Central American republics. The level of repression is not as fierce as in El Salvador, the gap between the rich and the poor is not as deep as in Guatemala, and the Honduran middle class has not been as influential as in Costa Rica (Acker 1988: 12). Compared to its neighbors—Guatemala, Nicaragua and El Salvador—Honduras stands out as a relatively peaceful country on the otherwise very turbulent Central American isthmus.[8]

Lately, however, there have been some interesting studies of Honduras. Kees Biekart, for example, makes an important analysis of civil society in the transition to democracy in El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras (1999). His focus is on non-governmental development aid agencies and how local civil society organizations are affected by private European aid organizations. This study differs from Biekart's book in several ways. First, the present study is concerned only with Honduras. Second, it does not focus on one particular organization, but attempts to provide a broader picture of civil society. Thus, this study is more limited in the sense that it is a single-case study, but it is more comprehensive in the sense that it attempts to cover the multitudinous interests that are represented in civil society.

On a more practical and constructive level, this study can be seen as an attempt to initiate a dialogue between the scholarly community and the donor community concerning civil society and its democracy-building potential. The donor community has, since the 1980s, promoted democracy in the Third World, and the strengthening of civil society is part of many donors' agendas. Nevertheless, there is still a vast distance between researchers and policy makers, which at times seems difficult to bridge. Drawing on both the traditional scholarly literature and the more policy-oriented literature, this study may contribute to bridging the gap, although it should be noted that the results should not be seen as policy recommendations.

Methodological Reflections

Any scientific study needs to address a number of methodological queries. The methodological queries embrace, among other things, the epistemological stance of the study, as well as research strategies and data collection techniques. In the following section, the study will be positioned in relation to different epistemological assumptions. In addition, the case study strategy is discussed. Finally, the sources of the empirical material are presented and assessed.

Our epistemological stance will have considerable methodological implications. The debate between different epistemological positions is therefore important to any study, as it forces the researcher to think about these queries and to position the study in relation to different epistemological perspectives. Textbooks on methods for social sciences typically start by emphasizing the unbridgeable division between positivist and hermeneutic approaches and, accordingly, between objectivism and relativism, and explaining and understanding (Hollis & Smith 1991). However, today, many scholars would agree that the antagonism between positivism and hermeneutics is not as deep and unbridgeable as sometimes assumed, and that there are no watertight bulkheads between understanding and explaining (Bjereld et al. 1999: 66-67; King et al. 1994: 34; Berge 1995: 108). A substantial portion of social science research does not belong to any hard-line version of positivism or hermeneutics but rather tends to move towards a middle position, in which explanatory and understanding approaches are inseparable, and where understanding is part of the positivist's work, and hermeneutics does not seek to avoid the search for causal relations (Bjereld et al. 1999: 66-67). There is interplay between explaining and understanding, and an understanding process will in practice include both elements of understanding and elements of explaining, just as any attempt to explain involves an element of understanding (Helenius 1990: 280-281; see also Berge 1995: 108; and King et al. 1994: 34).

The ambition of this study is to arrive at a conceptual framework that could improve our understanding of a complex empirical phenomenon. A conceptual framework could be seen as a preparatory construct to a theory (Stenelo 1972: 14). In our attempts to further the understanding of this phenom-

enon, there is a notion of causality in the sense that there is an assumption of a relationship between the phenomena to which the concepts refer (Stenelo 1972: 15). The conceptual framework outlined is, of course, only one way to analyze a phenomenon and is, naturally, affected by our pre-understanding. Our pre-understanding guides the choice of theoretical perspectives, the formulation of the research problem and the methods for collecting and analyzing the material. In addition, it is important to note that any attempt to outline a conceptual framework involves a simplification and does not capture the complexity of a real phenomenon.

On Case Studies

Addressing a complex empirical phenomenon such as democratization processes in Third World countries, the case study approach stands out as a rewarding research strategy. Admittedly, it has been argued that case studies do not contribute to scientific inquiry as much as comparative studies and statistical analysis, on the grounds that it is not possible to generalize from one single case and that case studies sometimes are limited to idiographic story-telling (see Yin 1984: 21). It has also been argued that case studies lack rigor, in the sense that results and conclusions are biased (see e.g. Yin 1984: 21). As a response to this critique, advocates of case studies have defended the research strategy by arguing that generalizations are not desirable. Bent Flyvbjerg, for example, states that generalizations are overvalued as a source of scientific development (1991: 149). The position taken in this study is that there is nothing inherently wrong with generalizations as such, but that we should avoid making generalizations from a single case study. However, even though a single case study cannot constitute the basis for generalizations, it can still make an important contribution to theory building (Lijphart 1971: 691; Eckstein 1992: 119). Arend Lijphart argues that:

> […] single cases investigated in case studies are usually implicitly viewed in the theoretical context of a larger number of cases: a case study is a study of a certain problem, proposition, or theory, and a case belongs to a larger category of cases (Lijphart 1975: 160).

A case is not a unique phenomenon but is always a case of something and implies the question "what is it a case of?" (Andersen 1997: 61). Robert K. Yin writes: "[…] case studies, like experiments, are generalizable to theoretical propositions and not to populations or universes" (1984: 21). Thus, the conclusions are only valid for the case examined, not for any other cases. But the ideas we acquire from the case studies can be reformulated into theoretical propositions that can eventually be tested in other studies (Uhlin 1995: 5). An in-depth analysis of a single case may stimulate our imagination to think about alternative relationships, generate new ideas and force the researcher to think differently. And it seems reasonable to argue that this is a necessary component for producing new knowledge.

One advantage of an in-depth study of a single case is that it is possible to consider the case-specific context. When analyzing a case located in a different cultural sphere there is always a risk of misunderstandings, due to cultural and linguistic differences. However, a single case study gives the researcher an opportunity to slowly approach the case and to take different contexts into account. Of course, a complete understanding can never be reached; the researcher remains a stranger and there are cultural codes that can perhaps never be understood (Keesing 1981: 5-9). But it seems reasonable to argue that a single case increases the chances for better understanding, compared to a study in which multiple cases are examined. Moreover, the case study strategy allows the researcher, despite limited research resources, to study a phenomenon intensively (Lijphart 1971: 691). And this—in turn—reduces the risk for misunderstandings. Of course, the intense study of a case cannot be compared with the anthropological method of fieldwork, which includes intimate participation in a community for long periods of time (Keesing 1981: 5-9).

Another advantage of the case study method is that the framework and analysis can be kept open longer and accordingly leave more time to discover new variables that were not originally included in the analysis. Thus, the analytic freedom can be sustained longer (Stenelo 1984: 24). Starting out from a conceptual framework inevitably means that some factors are singled out as potentially important for the research question, whereas others are ignored when collecting the material. However, during the research process, new ideas may be reaped: there may be other factors

that could be of importance for our research question, factors that initially were not included in the conceptual framework.

Discovering new factors when collecting and examining the empirical material actualizes another epistemological debate, namely whether we proceed from a deductive or an inductive approach. An inductive method emanates from several isolated cases, and a relation that has been observed in these cases is considered valid for all cases. The main weakness of induction it that it provides empirical summaries rather than theoretical ideas. At the other end of the spectrum is deduction—a research design that emanates from a general rule that is supposed to explain the separate cases (Alvesson & Sköldberg 1994: 41). The main weakness of deduction is that, unless it is based on an empirical pilot study, it is disconnected from the empirical material (Alvesson & Sköldberg 1994: 44). If we were to formulate theories and logically deduce hypothesis for testing, it could lead to a "premature closure of mind", because we would fail to see anything that is not specified in the theory (Rose 1991: 448).

However, in practice few studies could be described as departing from a strictly inductive or deductive approach. The point of departure for the present study is a conceptual framework, and an empirical case is selected on the premise that it seems to illustrate the theoretical perspective applied. During the collection and analysis of empirical material, other factors have materialized that seem to have impact on the process under examination. That is, factors that were not singled out in the theories have later surfaced. These factors have later been integrated into the analysis. And, factors that we initially thought would be important turned out to be of less importance. Accordingly, this study does not proceed from a purely inductive or deductive perspective. The research process is rather based on an oscillation between the conceptual framework and empirical information. The conceptual framework guides the collection of material and gives us an idea of what to look for. The empirical material, then, generates new ideas. This research strategy has much in common with the research method called abduction (Alvesson & Sköldberg 1994: 42-43).[9] One objective of this study has been to find a position that provides an opportunity to consider the context, but does not result in ideographic detailed description. Moving back and forth between the empirical

material and the conceptual framework enables us to consider the context, but still allows us to be guided by the conceptual framework.

There are—as pointed out by for example Eckstein (1992), Lijphart (1971) and Yin (1984)—many different kinds of case study methods, each one with its own logic.[10] The kind of case study selected is determined by the theoretical questions asked, and the theoretical ambitions of the study. This study is best described as a disciplined-configurative case study, with elements of the heuristic case study strategy, to use Harry Eckstein's terms (1992: 138-147). With a disciplined-configurative case study we depart from existing theories, but the case examined could illustrate the need of new theoretical propositions. Eckstein suggests that during the research process we might come across a puzzle that existing theories fail to address (1992: 139). Theory building is thus regarded chiefly as being of an ad hoc character or, by coincidence, to complete existing theories. In contrast, heuristic studies more directly seek to find new general problems and identify preliminary theoretical ideas (Eckstein 1992: 143; George 1979: 51). This study makes use of existing theoretical ideas, which are placed into a broader conceptual framework. However, the empirical case currently under investigation generates new preliminary theoretical ideas. The preliminary theoretical ideas derived from the analysis of the case can be formulated into hypotheses and eventually tested on other cases.[11] But that is beyond the aim of this study.

There are of course numerous new democracies in the Third World. Why, then, select Honduras as a single case? The most important reason is that there have been few studies of civil society and democracy in Honduras. The fact that Honduras has not been subject to much analysis is not an argument for choosing it as a case *per se*, but as it has hitherto been somewhat neglected within democratization studies, this case gives us an opportunity to gain new insights that could contribute to theoretical development. Another reason is that Honduras provides an excellent opportunity to analyze the impact of international influence. Up until hurricane Mitch caused severe and widespread damage in 1998, Honduras was of little interest to the donor community. However, in the aftermath of the disaster there has been considerable international interest. Hence, the case provides an opportunity to analyze how external

influence in terms of civil society support has affected the Honduran civil society and its democracy-building potential.

Material

One objective of this study has been to use variegated sources of information, employing various kinds of written and interview material. As regards the written material, articles from three daily newspapers have been used: *La Tribuna*, *El Heraldo* and *La Prensa*. Using three different newspapers assures that most opinions are covered. In addition, the weekly *Honduras this week* has also been used. Publications and research reports from research institutes and civil society organizations also constitute an important part of the written material. A substantial amount of the material is published by Centro de Documentación de Honduras (CEDOH), an independent center for documentation. For example, this study has benefited from the comprehensive writings of the Honduran sociologist Leticia Salomón, who is affiliated with the center and has vast knowledge of Honduran society. In addition, other material from civil society organizations such as pamphlets, information sheets and web material have been used. The articles by the civil society network Red de Desarrollo Sostenible (RDS-HN) have been an important source of information. Furthermore, reports from the World Bank, bilateral donors and Swedish civil society organizations have been employed.

A second type of source is the interview material. Around 50 interviews have been conducted in Sweden, Guatemala and Honduras between 1999 and 2002, of which the lion's share took place in Honduras. The respondents selected are representatives of civil society organizations, politicians, civil servants, journalists and representatives of the international donor community. The interviews were organized as semi-structured conversations. A general questionnaire consisting of around ten broad questions was used, which the respondent could reflect over. With these broadly formulated questions the interview situation was open for suggestions from the respondents, and they were given the opportunity to deliberate over issues they found particularly interesting. Accordingly, the questions were not necessarily asked in the order they were written down

but followed the course of the conversation. Depending on the particular interest of the organizations, the questions were sometimes reformulated to fit the organization's particular interest, so that the respondent could elaborate the answers. In some cases it makes no sense to ask questions concerning state-society relations in general (or democracy, or civil society), but the question must be asked in such a way that the respondents understand the question. A tape recorder has been used as a complement to written notes, with a few exceptions.

One major difficulty with the interviews concerns, of course, linguistic problems. During most interviews a translator was present to translate the questions into Spanish. But the translator did not translate the responses into English unless explicitly asked to. Nevertheless, it is possible that there have been misinterpretations at times—the translator might have used another word than the originally intended one. It was however possible to interrupt and ask the translator to reformulate the question.

Interview material has important heuristic value (see Stenelo 1984: 31). The interviews provided new ideas, pointed in new directions and highlighted themes that were not initially considered. Against this background, it has been an advantage to be able to conduct the interviews at different points in time.[12] The interview material is, of course, also important because it illustrates certain arguments. Sometimes the information obtained from interviews provides a background to certain events or provides us with a deeper understanding of certain events (Stenelo 1984: 31). Interview material, however, requires careful and critical reflection. Respondents answer questions in a context-dependent situation. As a result, the answers might be intentionally articulated with a view to expurgate true opinions, or with excessive carefulness for reasons of for example collegiality and political correctness (Alvesson & Deetz 2000: 216-127). Thus there is always a risk of misinterpretation, or misunderstanding. This problem is accentuated when interviews are being made in another cultural context. One pitfall here is that an outsider could misunderstand cultural codes, references and irony (see e.g. Thurén 1986: 25-27). Moreover, the respondents may have identified some organizations or persons as scapegoats, they may have overestimated their own role in a particular process, or they may have simply forgot. People's memory

is selective and people tend to remember things that they are interested in, that are of use to them, and that are congruent with existing values (Thurén 1986: 28-35). Clearly, interviews pose methodological challenges. But, as long as they are used with caution, interview material can be of additional value for empirical research.

The desire of some respondents to remain anonymous has of course been respected. Many civil society organizations work in an environment that is not openly hostile, but sharing information could place the respondents in a precarious situation. Many aid-receiving organizations have a dependency that must be respected. Thus, even though Honduran civil society is outspoken most of the time, some respondents feel that they might put the organization in a hazardous situation if they were to be identified. These are of course delicate situations and should be treated with respect. Some respondents would not at all mind being presented with their name. However, it is unlikely that anyone could prepare for how things said in an interview will appear in written and published texts (see Lundberg 2001: 20). Nevertheless, there is an important distinction to be made between confidentiality and anonymity. Confidentiality means removing all information that might indicate the identity of the respondent. Thus, the reader would not know whether the respondent worked for an organization or within the public administration. Anonymity, by contrast, means keeping the respondents nameless (Berg 1989: 138).

Even though securing the anonymity of the respondents has been important for this study, the context in which the respondent is situated is critical for our understanding. In the following text, it is therefore possible to identify the respondent as being a representative of civil society (referred to as "cs interviewee"), of political society ("ps interviewee"), of the donor community ("dc interviewee") or of the mass media or academia ("m/a interviewee").

In addition to these formal interviews, personal conversations of a more informal character have also contributed to the study. Although one cannot ascribe informal conversations the same scientific value as interviews, they have been an important source of information especially as regards pointing in new directions and suggesting topics that have later been followed up during the interviews.

Plan of the Study and the Argument in Brief

The book is divided into ten chapters, including this one. *Chapter Two* is devoted to a discussion of democracy and democratization. The division between minimalist and maximalist views of democracy is introduced at the outset. In this discussion, Dahl's concept of polyarchy stands out as a particularly useful approach to democracy. A brief overview of different approaches to the study of democratization is followed by a discussion of whether theories based on South European and South American experiences are applicable to the Central American political development.

Chapter Three is concerned with democratic development in post-transition societies. Many newly established democracies face serious problems—such as low levels of support for the democratic regime, low regime performance and weak and poorly functioning political institutions. Thus, a fragile democracy must develop into a more well-functioning and well-supported democratic system. Three aspects of democratic development in post-transition societies are here identified as particularly important: political institutionalization, regime performance and legitimacy of the democratic regime.

In *Chapter Four*, the concept of civil society is introduced. In this chapter, the concept is analyzed and traced back to its origins. Admittedly, the concept has been fiercely criticized, and one reason behind the conceptual confusion, it is argued, is that civil society is sometimes confused with civic community and the idea of social capital. However, civil society is not civic community and does not necessarily generate social capital. Civil society is not inherently virtuous or conducive to democracy, but can also be what we here refer to as "uncivil society". Therefore, we must analyze the internal levels of democracy in civil society organizations if we are to understand civil society's relation to democracy. In the same vein, it is being argued that the state is the enabler of civil society, and is therefore a central aspect of civil society's democracy-building potential.

Chapter Five concludes the theoretical part of the study. This chapter continues the analysis of civil society, but now in a democratization context. It is argued that in the pre-transition period and during the actual transition to democracy, civil society's most important function is to be a

countervailing power that brings pressure to bear for a transition to democratic rule. In the post-transition period, the functions of civil society constitute a complex mix of countervailing and state supportive functions. Civil society, in terms of its democracy-building functions, is best understood in this period as an agenda-setter, as an educator, as a counterpart of the government and as a source of new political alternatives.

This study approaches civil society from what is called a structured-contingency perspective. The prior non-democratic regime leaves a legacy that cannot be ignored if we want to understand the nature of civil society and its democracy-building potential. The character of the prior regime, particularly the degree of pluralism allowed but also co-optive strategies of the governing elite, molds the options available to different actors such as civil society. What democracy-building functions civil society may be able to perform are shaped by the larger political context. An included or co-opted civil society loses its countervailing power. Chapter Five also acknowledges the importance of considering the external impact on civil society. Development assistance could strengthen local civil societies, but it might also create and maintain undemocratic, artificial and aid-dependent civil societies. Moreover, attempts to promote democracy through civil society support can also facilitate co-optation of civil society and create an institutional unbalance that ultimately undermines democracy. With the internal level of democracy, the political context and the external dimension taken into consideration, a conceptual framework for civil society's democracy-strengthening functions is outlined.

In *Chapter Six*, the empirical part of the study is introduced with an analysis of Honduran civil society from a historical and comparative perspective. In contrast to neighboring Guatemala, El Salvador and Nicaragua, there has always been some space for popular participation in Honduras. From the 1950s and onwards, there has been a relatively high level of peasant and union activity. The Honduran elite's style of governing—altering social reforms with repression of popular movements—might have prevented social unrest including revolutions and civil wars such as the neighbors encountered. But the governing elite also manipulated civil society and managed to split the peasant movement by favoring certain pro-government organizations.

The focus of *Chapter Seven* is on the transition to democracy. A weak, divided and delegitimized military regime lacking visions, combined with pressure from the USA to hold elections, are identified as the main reasons behind the military's decision to return to constitutional rule in 1980. It was clearly a regime-led transition, and the military managed to secure considerable autonomy for itself. As a result of US foreign policy in the region, Honduras became a highly militarized state, with both American soldiers and Contras on its territory. The transition coincided with an increase in human rights violations. Initially, civil society did not play a major role in the transition. However, the deteriorating human rights situation provoked a reaction from human rights organizations that emerged as vociferous actors with demands for respect for human rights, an end to military impunity and altered civil-military relations.

Chapter Eight provides an analysis of the Honduran post-transition context. The chapter argues that it is no longer the military that poses the most serious threat to the fragile democracy, but rather the weak rule of law, weak public accountability and civilian politicians' disrespect for democratic procedures. Moreover, prevailing traditions of clientelism and patrimonialism threaten to erode the support for democracy. Politicization of neutral institutions (such as the executive power's influence over the judicial system and the electoral system) clearly undermines the democratic process. In addition, Honduras remains one of the poorest countries in Latin America. In combination with widespread corruption, this can erode legitimacy for the democratic regime. Yet despite these democratic shortcomings, support for democracy seems to have been increasing during recent years.

Chapter Nine, which concludes the empirical analysis, can be broadly divided into three parts. The first part of the chapter is an attempt to map Honduran civil society. To begin with, a distinction is made between the old popular organizations (e.g. peasants' and workers' movement) and the new organizations (e.g. development NGOs, human rights organizations and indigenous groups). This distinction is important, as the old and new organizations seem to have different attitudes towards the state. The second part of the chapter is concerned with the internal levels of democracy. Despite difficulties in examining the internal level of democ-

racy of the organizations, it is a tentative conclusion that strong leaders control many organizations, which could be both an asset and a weakness from a democratic point of view. Moreover, the same informal traditions that characterize political society—personalism, clientelism and verticalism—are deeply rooted in civil society as well.

In the third part of the chapter, the different functions of civil society outlined in Chapter Five are analyzed. Civil society has been an important educator and source of civic competence in post-transition Honduras. It is particularly through courses and seminars that knowledge concerning democracy and citizens' rights is spread. Civil society has also functioned as a source of pluralism, and more specifically as a source of new political alternatives. New political parties have emerged on the electoral arena, and with their origins in civil society they have bridged the gap between political society and civil society. The new political parties have not yet managed to challenge the dominance of the traditional parties, but by their mere existence they have contributed to increased pluralism and representation in society. In addition, civil society has been an important agenda setter in the post-transition period. Besides their protests against military impunity and human rights abuses, civil society organizations have demanded a reform of both the judicial system and the electoral system. Civil society organizations have also managed to put the issue of protection for ethnic minorities on the political agenda. Finally, it is argued that civil society has been an important counterpart of the government in the reconstruction process after hurricane Mitch, and that civil society organizations, particularly development NGOs, have participated in the designing and implementation of projects initiated by the Social Investment Fund.

Civil society's democracy-building potential is clearly affected by the political context and the external influences. Traditionally, the ruling elite has attempted to control civil society, and this behavior has continued after the transition to democracy. In the post-Mitch era, this behavior has been reinforced by the donors' demands for civil society participation. The Honduran government has institutionalized civil society participation through different commissions. As a result, civil society lost part of its countervailing power and its important function as an unofficial opposi-

tion in the country. Thus, in order to understand civil society's democracy-building potential it does not suffice to study civil society in isolation: we must broaden our scope to include the political context and the external dimension as well. The study concludes with *Chapter Ten*, in which the empirical and theoretical arguments are summarized and further discussed. The implications of the conceptual framework are discussed, and in this concluding chapter a number of suggestions for future research are introduced.

Notes

1 A Consultative Group meeting is a forum where government representatives, development assistance agencies and multilateral agencies (e.g. the World Bank) meet to coordinate international development efforts (Sida, *Mitch and After*, 2001: 25). In this study "Consultative Group" refers to the Consultative Group for the Reconstruction and Transformation of Central America.

2 The "Third World" is of course a contentious concept. The concept descends from the Cold War discourse when countries were divided into Capitalist industrialized countries (the First World) and Communist industrialized countries (the Second World). The countries that did not fall into either of these categories were, consequently, referred to as the Third World. In the post-Cold War era, there is no longer any rationale for such a categorization, and the concept of the Third World therefore seems to be somewhat obsolete (Hyden 1998: 8). In addition, the countries to which the concept refers demonstrate extreme differences in terms of economic, social and political development. Compare for example Uruguay's GNI per capita of US$ 5,670 with Honduras' US$ 900, or with Ethiopia's US$ 100 (GNI per capita 2001, Atlas method) (World Bank, *World Development Indicators*, 2002). However, as the concept is still frequently used, and in absence of any better alternative, this study will employ the concept.

3 A wave of democratization is a "group of transitions from nondemocratic to democratic regimes that occur within a specified period of time and that significantly outnumber transitions in the opposite direction during that period of time". According to Huntington three such waves have occurred. The first wave of democratization took place between 1828 and 1926. The second wave of democratization started in 1943 and lasted until 1962. The third wave started with the Portuguese transition in 1974. It spread from Southern Europe to Latin America, Asia, Africa and, finally, East and Central Europe. Thus, the third wave was certainly a global wave of democratization. Huntington's analysis has been criticized and he admits that defining when a wave starts and ends is an arbitrary exercise (1991: 15-26).

4 The first reverse wave occurred between 1922 and 1942. It began with Mussolini's disposal of the Italian democracy. The second wave of democratization (1943-1962) was also

followed by a reverse wave during the period 1958-1975. This time the reverse wave was most visible in Latin America and Africa (Huntington 1991: 17-21).

5 In Allen's view, civil society is part of a neo-liberal project, and it is only grant-seeking NGOs, academia and the international financial institutions that actually need the concept. Allen argues that class and gender, rather than civil society, are better factors for understanding political change (1997: 337).

6 NGO refers to Non-Governmental Organization. Development NGOs are those NGOs in the Third World (sometimes referred to as Southern non-governmental organizations, SNGOs) that are concerned with delivering services to the poor sectors, often funded by donor agencies or Northern non-governmental organizations (NNGOs), such as Oxfam, Save the Children Fund or Caritas. What has complicated this discussion is that in the literature on development assistance, the term NGO is often used to describe development NGOs. Fowler, for example, defines NGOs as nongovernmental, nonprofit *development* organizations (1996b: 169, italics added). This literature (see e.g. Edwards & Hulme (eds.) 1996; Clayton (ed.) 1996; Pearce 2000) makes a distinction between NGOs and membership organizations, often referred to as grassroots organizations (GROs) or community-based organizations (CBOs). The main difference is that membership organizations are accountable to their members, and NGOs are not (see e.g. Clayton (ed.) 1996; Fowler 1996b). The NGO literature has thus in a very unfortunate way equated NGOs with development NGOs, and consequently contributed to confusion in the debate. This is why we can see expressions like "NGO impact in civil society" or "NGOs strengthening civil society". The problem is that the debate is donor driven; a NGO as it is defined within mainstream political science refers to a non-governmental organization that is not necessarily concerned with the provision of service to some disadvantaged group such as illiterates or ethnic minorities or a channel for development assistance from the Western industrialized countries to Third World countries. Given this confusion we will avoid the term NGO and refer to civil society organizations (CSOs). Development NGOs are thus regarded as one type of CSO.

7 One classical and often cited work is William S. Stokes' *Honduras: An Area Study in Government*, published in 1950. More recent publications are: Acker (1988), Euraque (1996) and Schultz & Sundloff-Schultz (1994).

8 Central America here refers to the traditional "five republics"—Costa Rica, Guatemala, El Salvador, Nicaragua and Honduras. It is a quite conventional approach for political studies to define Central America this way. The English-speaking mini-state Belize's political history and culture are different from the other five republics. It received independence from Great Britain in 1981. Panama is also excluded because, despite its geographical location, it has a completely different political history. Panama gained independence from Colombia in 1903. On the other hand, the "five republics" have shared a common history since the Spanish Conquest. Between 1823 and 1838 they existed as the United Provinces of Central America (see e.g. Flora & Torres-Rivas (eds.) 1989: xvi-xvii; Walker & Armony 2000: xvi-xix).

9 Abduction has been described as the middle ground between, or as a combination of, induction and deduction. The general idea is that the researcher alternates between theoretical ideas and empirical material. Theory serves as a source of inspiration for what patterns can look like, and that allows the researcher to understand the empirical data. But

the empirical data also generate new theoretical ideas. There is thus a constant alternation from theory to empirical material and the other way around—each one is constantly reinterpreted in the light of the other. This research strategy means that empirical material is always analyzed from a theoretical "pre-understanding" and the observation is never independent of the theoretical concepts and, in turn, the empirical information generates new theoretical ideas (Alvesson & Sköldberg 1994: 42-43).

10 Lijphart mentions atheoretical case study, interpretative case study, hypothesis-generating case study, theory-confirming case study, theory-infirming case study and deviant case study (1971: 691). Eckstein has another terminology and uses the terms configurative-idiographic case study, disciplined-configurative case study, heuristic case study, plausibility probe and crucial case study (1992: 136-153). George concludes that despite different labels, the types are more or less the same. The only difference is the plausibility probe that does not correspond to any of Lijphart's types, and Lijphart's deviant case that does not have an equivalent type in Eckstein's categorization (see George 1979: 66).

11 See Eckstein for a discussion of the so-called "building-block technique". A series of heuristic case studies could be a fruitful strategy for theory development (1992: 143-144).

12 Interviews were made in Guatemala (March 1999), Honduras (March-April 1999, February-March 2000, September 2000, October-November 2001), and Sweden (October-November 2002).

Chapter Two

Democracy and Democratization

The past two decades have demonstrated a global expansion of countries ruled by democratic principles. But what do we mean by democracy? How can we understand the transition from authoritarian forms of rule to democracy? And do democracy and democratization processes look the same in different parts of the world? To be able to understand the democracy-building functions of civil society we must begin by specifying our perception of democracy. It should be emphasized that the discussion here makes no claims to being an extensive discussion of different models of democracy.[1] In the second part of the chapter different approaches to the study of democratization are discussed. It is suggested that whereas structural theories have had difficulties explaining why a transition to democracy is initiated at a certain point in time, the actor-oriented theories have failed to show how actors are actually constrained by certain structures—such as the authoritarian legacy, for example. The chapter concludes with a discussion of how well these theories help us understand democratization processes in Central America.

Conceptions of Democracy

> 'Democracy' is derived from *demokratia*, the root meanings of which are *demos* (people) and *kratos* (rule). Democracy refers to a form of government in which, in contradistinction to monarchies and aristocracies, the people rule. Democracy entails a political community in which there is some form of *political equality* among the people (Held 1996: 1, italics in orginal).

Most people would agree that democracy is rule by the people. But even this limited definition raises several problems; for example, who are the people (the

demos), how can they participate, and what does rule include? (Held 1996: 2). Obviously there is potential for disagreement over the meanings of democracy, and consequently different models of democracy have emerged, such as deliberative, participative, or multiculturalist democracy. An analysis of different models of democracy is not the main concern of this study, but the discussion of different concepts of democracy forms a background for the imminent analysis of civil society's democracy-building potential.

Minimalist vs. Maximalist Conceptions of Democracy

There is no one single conception of democracy. Rather, the literature on the topic is characterized by a lack of consensus concerning what democracy means. To offer an extremely simplified picture, one could propose that a major dividing line runs between advocates of a minimalist concept and advocates of a maximalist concept of democracy. Whereas "minimalist" definitions refer to the institutional arrangements, "maximalist" definitions represent the broader, more all-embracing concepts that pay attention to social and economic democracy as well. For example, participative and deliberative models of democracy, and feminist and multiculturalist models of democracy are often presented as "maximalist" concepts of democracy (Lindensjö 1999: 11-31; SOU 2000:1: 21-23). The advantage of the minimalist definition, it is often argued, is that it provides a more precise analytical tool that allows for comparisons of completely different countries, and makes it possible to distinguish between democracies and other forms of rule (Rueschemeyer et al. 1992: 10). The advantage of the maximalist concept of democracy is, of course, that it captures the real possibility for citizen participation, and real competition among democratic contestants and democratic relations, not only in the public sphere but also in the private sphere.

Minimalist definitions of democracy, sometimes referred to as procedural models of democracy, perceive democracy as an institutional arrangement or a set of procedures and institutions for decision-making. The focus is on the electoral process, in which citizens choose between different candidates. Joseph Schumpeter, perhaps the best-known advocate of the procedural concept, argues:

> The democratic method is that institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for the people's vote (Schumpeter 1942: 269).

Democracy is thus regarded as a method for making political decisions. Samuel P. Huntington, who follows the Shumpeterian tradition, defines democracy as a system in which

> its most powerful collective decision makers are selected through fair, honest, and periodic elections in which candidates freely compete for votes and in which virtually all the adult population is eligible to vote (Huntington 1991: 7).

Two pivotal features can be derived from this definition: contestation and participation. In addition, democracy also implies civil and political freedoms such as freedom to speak, to publish, to assemble and to organize (Huntington 1991: 7). Hence three aspects are identified as central components of democracy: competition, participation, and civil liberties and political rights. In Huntington's view, elections are the central fundaments of a democracy. Democracy is no guarantee against bad government policies, but the population can punish the government at the following election (Huntington 1991: 6).

Advocates of a maximalist concept of democracy argue that this view, in contrast to the procedural definition, focuses attention on the substance of the democratic processes. For example, direct participation in decision making is an important element of the *participant* model of democracy. Participation is looked upon as a duty rather than a right. Ideally, every citizen should participate directly, and decentralization is consequently an important aspect of participatory democracy (see e.g. Lindensjö 1999: 11-31; SOU 2000:1: 21-23). The *deliberative* model of democracy is based upon the idea that democracy emanates from the public deliberation of citizens. Public deliberation refers to reasoned agreement between citizens, and decisions are based on debate or discussion. Democracy provides the framework for deliberation between free and equal citizens (see e.g. Elster 1998). In a *multicultural* model

of democracy, justice is emphasized over equal treatment of the citizens and ethnic, cultural or religious minorities may be in need of special rights (see Lindensjö 1999: 11-31; SOU 2000:1: 21-23).

Advocates of the minimalist concept of democracy have emphasized the methodological disadvantages of maximalist concepts of democracy and questioned the use of such an elusive concept in empirical research. Huntington, for example, expresses his doubt towards this kind of definition as "[f]uzzy norms do not yield useful analysis" (1991: 9). A related argument concerns the so-called traveling problem. Concepts are defined in a certain context, and if we want to transfer them, or make them travel to another context, they run the risk of becoming stretched. Conceptual stretching occurs when a concept applies to other types of empirical cases than it originally was intended to:

> It appears that we can cover more—in travelling terms—only by saying less, and by saying less in a far less precise manner (Sartori 1970: 1034).

If we still want to make a concept travel but avoid stretching, the number of defining attributes must be kept low. Concepts can be defined at different levels of abstraction, and, to use Giovanni Sartori's terms, concepts move along a ladder of abstraction. Concepts with few defining attributes (with low intension, to use Sartori's terms) apply to more cases (broad extension) and are high on the ladder of abstraction. The differences between the cases to which the concept applies is accordingly greater. On the other hand, a concept with more defining attributes (high intension) applies to fewer cases (small extension) and is low on the ladder of abstraction. The variance among the cases is low. Hence by reducing the number of attributes, the concept becomes more abstract, and accordingly, by adding attributes we can make a concept more specific. A concept is being stretched when the extension is broadened without diminishing the intension (Sartori 1970: 1040-1041). Sartori says that being aware of the ladder of abstraction makes it possible to avoid the pitfalls of conceptual stretching. By moving downwards on the ladder of abstraction, analytical differentiation can be achieved. By moving upwards, conceptual stretching

can be avoided. A concept with few defining attributes can be applied to different empirical cases with less stretching involved. The problem confronting democratic research is that the concept of democracy has been stretched in order to fit more countries. Moving up the ladder of abstraction in this context means using a definition of democracy with few defining attributes, and the analytically clear and relatively abstract concept of procedural democracy seems to be a solution. David Collier and Steven Levitsky have criticized this strategy on the grounds that the concept becomes too general and implies a loss of conceptual differentiation. While climbing the ladder of abstraction implies less conceptual stretching, it results in a loss of conceptual differentiation (Collier & Levitsky 1997: 437).[2]

Another argument that has been raised in favor of the minimalist view is that the separation of democracy and economic equality provides an opportunity to study the causal dynamics between democracy and economic equality. Michael Burton, Richard Gunther & John Higley, for example, do not deny the importance of equality but stress that the concepts should be kept analytically separated (1992: 2). In the same vein, Terry Lynn Karl argues that a more procedural definition of democracy

> has the advantage of permitting a systematic and objective investigation of the relationship between democratic political forms and the long-range pursuit of equity (Karl 1990: 2).[3]

The most common argument for a procedural definition of democracy, however, is that it provides a cutoff point that separates democracies from other forms of rule (O'Donnell 1996a: 36). Dietrich Rueschemeyer, Evelyne Huber Stephens & John D. Stephens who use a procedural definition in their study of capitalist development and democracy, stress the need of being able to distinguish democracies from other forms of rule. Their procedural definition of democracy does not correspond to the "most far-reaching ideals of democratic thought" but they argue quite convincingly:

> We care about formal democracy because it tends to be more than merely formal. It tends to be real to some extent. Giving the many a real voice in the formal collective decision-making of a country is the

> most promising basis for further progress in the distribution of power and other forms of substantive equality (Rueschemeyer et al. 1992: 10).

However, there is obviously an inherent danger in equating democracy with elections or what Philippe C. Schmitter & Terry Lynn Karl refer to as the *fallacy of electoralism*—of equating democracy with fair, honest and regular elections (1991: 78). Put briefly, with a minimalist definition of democracy, several countries would fit into the democratic group because they hold elections regularly. We have witnessed regimes with regular elections but with severe violations of human rights and non-elected actors that control the elected politicians. As Andreas Schedler correctly points out, elections can be an element of authoritarian control (2002: 36). For example, rulers may restrict the scope of elective office or limit the jurisdiction of elected offices. Moreover, rulers can, by different means, restrict access to the electoral arena of opposition parties, restrict political rights and civil liberties, and engage in coercion, corruption or electoral fraud (Schedler 2002: 39-46). Thus, the spectrum of manipulation of elections ranges from informal clientelist control of poor voters to unmistakable reserved domains (ibid.). The point, however, is that elections are easily manipulated and hence not a sufficient requirement for democracy.

Despite the problems involved, the procedural definition of democracy is frequently used in studies of democratization, one reason being that it is capable of identifying a breakpoint that marks the end of the transition to democracy. A broader maximalist definition of democracy does not allow for this clear analytical distinction. Robert Dahl's model of polyarchy could be interpreted as a solution to this problem. Dahl argues that the term "democracy" should be reserved for political systems that are totally responsive to all their citizens (1971: 2). However, most empirical cases do not qualify as democracies, and accordingly, Dahl uses the term polyarchy to describe these cases. Polyarchy is distinguished by two general characteristics: "[c]itizenship is extended to a relatively high proportion of adults, and the rights of citizenship include the opportunity to oppose and vote out the highest officials in the government" (Dahl 1989: 220). At a more concrete level, polyarchy requires the existence of seven institutions. These institutions are: 1) elected officials; 2) free and fair elections; 3) inclusive suffrage; 4) the right to run for

office; 5) freedom of expression; 6) alternative information; and 7) associational autonomy (Dahl 1989: 221). Dahl's model of polyarchy has been very influential for democratization studies. It has the advantage of being able to combine a broader conception of democracy with clear institutional requirements that are easily applied in empirical research.

The Expanded Procedural Minimum

Nevertheless, many newly established democracies or polyarchies, to employ Dahl's terminology, are marred by serious irregularities. Elections are indeed held, but informal practices of clientelism undermine the democratic regime (O'Donnell 1996a; Schedler 2002). One characteristic feature of the democratization processes in Latin America was the high level of autonomy that the military secured during the transitions (see e.g. Agüero 1992: 154-155; Cruz & Diamint 1998; Luckham 1996). Procedural definitions of democracy have not been able to capture this and have, accordingly, treated militarized countries as democracies (see e.g. Karl 1990: 1-2). It is obviously a democratic deficit that elected officials have no way to control the military and lack influence over the military sector. Karl uses the term "hybrid regime" to characterize such a political mix of electoral democracy and authoritarian features (militarization, authoritarianism, clientelism and pluralism) that coexist in some Central American countries (1995: 80-81). This type of regime has been labeled various things such as façade democracies, illiberal democracies, semi-democracies and pseudo-democracies. What they all have in common is that they share the minimalist criteria of contestation and participation and political rights and civil liberties, but yet in certain respects violate democratic principles.

Obviously, it would be difficult to work with a definition of democracy that is unable to differentiate between cases in which the military continues to maintain influence over the political process and cases in which the military is subordinated to the civilian politicians. Against this background some scholars have advocated an "expanded procedural minimum definition" that states that governments must have *de facto* effective power to govern (see Collier & Levitsky 1997: 434). Thus, by

adding definitional attributes, the procedural definition is extended. Juan J. Linz & Alfred Stepan, for example, claim that:

> A democratic transition is complete […] when a government comes to power that is the direct result of a free and popular vote, when this government *de facto* has the authority to generate new policies, and when the executive, legislative and judicial power generated by the new democracy does not have to share power with other bodies *de jure* (Linz & Stepan 1996: 3).

In the same vein, Guillermo O'Donnell argues convincingly that Dahl's list of criteria must be expanded. Hence, he adds two reservations to the polyarchy model. The first reservation states that "elected (and some appointed) officials should not be arbitrarily terminated before the end of their constitutionally mandated terms" and the second reservation states: "elected authorities should not be subject to severe constraints, vetoes, or exclusion from certain policy domains by other, nonelected actors, especially the armed forces" (O'Donnell 1996a: 35).[4] This expanded procedural minimum also includes civilian control over the military, which is an important aspect in the Latin American context in order to differentiate between cases where the military continues to control politics and cases where a real transition to democracy has taken place. With such an expanded procedural minimum as suggested by O'Donnell, the electoral fallacy is avoided and the civil-military relations are subject to examination. Yet, it is far from the maximalist assumptions of social and economic equality (Karl 1990: 2).

Dahl's polyarchy model with O'Donnell's added attributes will guide this analysis. This has the advantage of not restricting democracy to an institutional arrangement while at the same time it provides us with clear institutional criteria that can be applied in empirical research. With O'Donnell's attempt to broaden the polyarchy model, cases in which the military is still in control of certain policy areas, or in which elected politicians place themselves above the law, do not qualify as polyarchies.

Approaches to the Study of Democratization

To fully comprehend the problems in post-transition societies, the transition to democracy and its causes must be analyzed, one reason being that the nature of the transition often shapes the nature of the post-transition difficulties. Let us therefore turn to the different approaches to the study of democratization. There is a gap between theories of democracy and theories of democratization, or empirical democratic theory, as this set of theories is sometimes called. Whereas the former is concerned with democracy *per se*, the latter is concerned with causes of democracy and the actual process of democratization (Allison 1994). Empirical democratic theory, as an academic sub-discipline, embraces theories of democratization that display disparate ontological and epistemological views. Whereas the modernization theory, for example, gives structure the prime ontological status, transitologists give the actors and their strategic choices prime ontological status and disregard structures. And, whereas modernization theorists have relatively clear explanatory ambitions, transitologists argue for more idiographic research strategies. Thus, the study of democratization covers a vast array of different approaches.

Structural Theories of Democratization

One theoretical tradition that has been highly influential for democratization studies focuses on how underlying conditions, such as socioeconomic development, institutional legacy, class structure and cultural traditions, affect the onset and prospects for democratization. Among the most influential theories that focus on causes of democratization is the modernization school.[5] One of the most important contributions in this tradition is Seymour Martin Lipset's seminal study, *Some Social Requisites of Democracy: Economic Development and Political Legitimacy*, from 1959. The argument, in brief, is that economic development generates and sustains democracy. The famous device "the more well-to-do a nation, the greater the chances that it will sustain democracy" is the core of Lipset's argument. Basically, the focal point is the relation between economic development and democracy, and the relation between effectiveness and

perceived legitimacy of the political system. According to Lipset, macro-structures such as average wealth, the degree of industrialization and urbanization and the level of education were much higher in the countries that were democratic in Lipset's view.[6] Effective political systems, and particularly prolonged effectiveness, are likely to generate legitimate political systems (Lipset 1959: 86).[7]

The original ideas proposed by Lipset and other modernization theorists have been subject to widespread empirical examination. One frequent objection has been that, albeit a strong causal relationship between economic development and democracy could be verified, it is not as linear as originally assumed. For example, Larry Diamond concludes that the relation is not linear but rather N-shaped (1992: 109; see Arat 1988: 30 for a similar argument). Poor countries show a statistical correlation with democracy, but for the middle-income countries the correlation disappears, and then returns for high-level income countries.[8] It has also been argued that it is not economic development *per se* that is conducive to democracy, but rather *socioeconomic* development or human development and improvement in people's life quality (Diamond 1992: 125-128; see also Diamond & Marks 1992: 5-6). In a similar vein, Axel Hadenius' study of democracy and development in the Third World shows that popular education, particularly the literacy rate, is a critical factor for democracy (1992: 77-91).[9]

Another example of theories that emphasize structures is the literature on capitalist development, social structures and democracy, which is concerned with class structure and new groups (classes) and alliances that seek political influence. Barrington Moore's influential study *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*, first published in 1966, is a predecessor in this tradition. Moore concluded that the composition of social classes has an influence on the prospects for democracy, and in his view, the bourgeoisie is a crucial element for democracy (Moore 1993). Rueschemeyer, Stephens & Stephens have continued the tradition of concentrating on the relations between capitalist development, class alliances and democratization. They argue that class power, state power and transnational structures of power are crucial for democracy in the process of capitalist development. In essence, capitalist development and democracy are related because they tend to reduce the power of the landed

upper class and to strengthen the working class and other lower classes. In their view, the organized working class in alliance with the middle class plays a crucial role for democratic development (Rueschemeyer et al. 1992: 270-276; see also Huber et al. 1999: 170-171).[10]

An alternative approach focuses on political attitudes and values as critical factors in regime change and in producing stable democracy.[11] Cultural traditions, or political culture, are important as they provide the context or setting within which all political activity takes place (Kamrava 1995: 694). In this tradition, it has also been argued that democracy requires a certain set of values among its citizens (see e.g. Diamond 1994a: 1). In Gabriel A. Almond & Sidney Verba's classical study, *The Civic Culture*, first published in 1963, the authors argued that democracy is most congruent with the civic culture. Basically, Almond & Verba state that the complexity of liberal democracy requires engaged citizens who are passive enough to leave decisions to a political elite (1989).

Political culture theories have been fiercely criticized. Evidently, the approach involves an element of ethnocentrism and national stereotypes. The literature has also demonstrated an inability to capture change—how people's attitudes change over time (see e.g. Eckstein 1988). Within this theoretical tradition it has been debated whether democratic values are a result or a cause of a particular political system. When Almond & Verba (1989) and Ronald Inglehart (1988) argue that countries with democratic values, what they refer to as a civic culture, are more likely to produce and maintain democracy than countries with lower levels of civic culture, Edward N. Muller & Mitchell A. Seligson raise the question of whether the causality does not go in another direction—that the civic culture is an effect rather than a cause of democracy (1994: 647).[12] More convincingly, however, is Larry Diamond & Juan J. Linz's argument that there is a reciprocal relationship between democratic attitudes and the political system (1989: 10).

Finally, a set of theories that also emphasize underlying conditions are those that concentrate on institutional design, or how the character of the political institutions affects political regimes and regime change.[13] The general idea is that choices of political institutions, particularly the choice between parliamentarism and presidentialism, have a bearing on regime

stability. Linz, for example, argues that parliamentarism is more conducive to stable democracy than presidential systems as it produces a more flexible institutional context (e.g. Linz 1990a). One of Linz's arguments against presidentialism is the dual democratic legitimacy, which refers to the fact that both the president and the legislature are elected by the people.[14] If the president and the majority in the Congress represent different political parties and if there is a conflict, both parties could claim to have the legitimacy by having been elected by the people. There is no democratic principle to solve the dispute, and in these cases it may be tempting for the military to intervene as the *poder moderador* (see Linz 1990a: 62-64). Another problem concerns the fixed mandate in presidential systems. Advocates of presidentialism argue that the fixed period of time is conducive to stable democracy as it avoids the uncertainty that characterizes the parliamentary system, but Linz maintains that it is exactly this rigidity that is the problem as it leaves no space for continuous readjustments (Linz 1990a: 66-68). In defense of the presidential system, Matthew Soberg Shugart & John M. Carey argue that a considerable share of the criticism against presidentialism is based upon an inability to distinguish between those presidential constitutions that are designed in an authoritarian context and give all power to the executive, and those that do not give all power to the executive. Thus, it is not the presidential system *per se* that is a peril for the future stability of democracy, but rather the balance of power between the executive and the legislative power (Shugart & Carey 1992: 36-43).[15]

Towards an Actor-Oriented Approach to Democratization

One weakness that the "structural" theories of democratization share is the neglect of actions of individuals and groups and their ability to alter the direction of the democratization process. With structural theories we can increase our understanding of factors that facilitate or impede democratization. However, by ignoring agency these theories come close to determinism, that is, they consider man as "bounded by conditions over which he has little control" (Lundquist 1987: 38). For example, a country with a high level of socioeconomic development, or a country with a small,

marginalized land-owning aristocracy and a large middle class, and a country with widespread democratic values, seem to have good prospects for becoming democracies. And vice versa, countries with low socioeconomic development, a dominant land-owning aristocracy and authoritarian values have limited potential of becoming democracies. Accordingly, these countries seem to be predestined to authoritarian rule. Structural theories are also unable to explain what initiates a democratization process. The modernization thesis, for example, presents correlations at a single point in time but does not provide any information about what initiates such a transition, or of the direction of causality (Gill 2000: 3-7).

Against this background, Dankwart A. Rustow argued in his renowned study *Transitions to Democracy* (1970) for a shift from a functional to a genetic inquiry (1970: 341-345). The factors that keep a democracy stable are not necessarily the same that brought it into existence. In addition, Rustow challenged the traditional structural perspective with an attempt to bring the actors into democratization studies. In order to distinguish between function and genesis, Rustow rejected the general idea of "preconditions" for democracy, except for one background condition: national unity. National unity implies that one should have no doubt concerning the political community to which one belongs (1970: 350). Rustow divides the transition into different phases, the preparatory phase, the decision phase, and the habituation phase, and analyzes how the crucial actors act (1970: 350-360).[16] This was an important contribution to the empirical democratic theory because it attempted to bridge the gap between the structural theories and actor-oriented theories by introducing the idea of the elites.[17] Later, elites came to be the prime focus of the subfield of transitology, to which we shall now turn.

As a reaction to the structural reductionism that dominated in the late 1950s and 1960s, a new literature emerged in the late 1970s and early 1980s that emphasized the actual process of democratization.[18] The reasons for successful democratization were to be found in the transition itself, it was argued, not in certain structural preconditions (Karl & Schmitter 1991). A transition—defined as "the interval between one political regime and another"—contains two different processes: liberalization and democratization. Liberalization is the process wherein civil

rights are being redefined and extended (O'Donnell & Schmitter 1986: 6). It refers to the beginning of a transition to democracy, which takes place within an authoritarian context and can include different processes such as the provision for a free or less controlled mass media, the release of political prisoners, or acceptance of certain civil society organizations (Linz & Stepan 1996: 3). Democratization is the process wherein democratic institutions and procedures that embrace competitive elections, in which the winner gets control of the government, are established (Linz & Stepan 1996: 3). Two reservations should, however, be added. None of these processes are irreversible, and liberalization is not automatically followed by democratization (O'Donnell & Schmitter 1986: 8).

In the transitologists' view, every transition to democracy is unique. The entire process is characterized by uncertainty (e.g. Karl & Schmitter 1991: 270). According to Guillermo O'Donnell & Philippe C. Schmitter, "normal science methodology" is inappropriate or impossible in rapidly changing situations such as transitions to democracy. It is impossible to know beforehand which actors will be present, and actors will also change their positions and preferences during the transition (O'Donnell & Schmitter 1986: 4). As transitologists see general rules as impossible, the only thing they can do is to develop their conceptual tools:

> […] the high degree of indeterminacy embedded in situations where unexpected events (*fortuna*), insufficient information, hurried and audacious choices, confusion about motives and interests, plasticity and even indefinition of political identities, as well as the talents of specific individuals (*virtù*) are frequently decisive in determining outcome (O'Donnell & Schmitter 1986: 5).

This actor-oriented school was indeed an invigorating contribution to democratization studies, not only because it paid attention to agency and thereby initiated a more dynamic perspective. It also implied a rupture with the functionalist research, such as the modernization school, that was based upon a belief that the way the West had developed was the only possible way towards democracy.[19] In contrast, the sub-field of "transitology" was highly characterized by an ideographic research design.

However, there were some moderate attempts to make some general statements, often articulated in terms of modes of transition (see e.g. Huntington 1991; Karl 1990). The main actors involved in the transition, the so-called hard-liners and soft-liners within the authoritarian regime and moderates and radicals within the opposition, and their relative strengths, positions, and strategies shape the modes of the transition. And the mode of transition, in turn, has implications for the post-transition development. Soft-liners within the regime often want to liberalize in order to regain legitimacy for the regime, whereas this is not acceptable to hard-liners. In the democratic opposition the moderates are willing to negotiate the transition with the regime elite, whereas the radicals refuse all cooperation (see e.g. Huntington 1991; O'Donnell & Schmitter 1986).[20]

Unfortunately, the attempts to theorize different modes of transition have demonstrated a predilection for using different labels for the (more or less) same empirical phenomena. For example, Huntington's term transformation corresponds to Linz's term *reforma*, to Share & Mainwaing's transaction and to Linz & Stepan's *reforma-pactada*. We shall not enter this conceptual jungle. Let us just identify the three most common modes of transition. When elites initiate and guide a transition to democracy we have a transformation, a *reforma*, a transaction, or a *reforma-pactada*. When opposition groups seize power and overthrow the authoritarian regime it is a transition of replacement, of *ruptura*, or of breakdown or collapse. Finally, when the transition is a result of a joint action of the (weakened) regime and the opposition negotiating the transition in sequential steps it is a transition of transplacement or of extrication (see e.g. Huntington 1991: 109-163; Gill 2000: 67-71).[21]

Karl uses two dimensions to analyze different modes of transition.[22] The first dimension deals with the question of whether the transition is initiated and guided by the elite or by the mass public. The second dimension is concerned with the transition strategy—if it is based on compromise or on force. An elite-dominated compromise constitutes a "pact". If the elite is using violence or forcing the transition, the result is a transition by imposition. If the masses are guiding the transition with compromises we have a reform, and if the masses use violence we have a revolution (Karl 1990: 8-9).

> Latin America, at one time or another, has experienced all four modes of transition. To date, however, *no* stable political democracy has resulted from regime transitions in which mass actors have gained control, even momentarily, over traditional ruling classes (Karl 1990: 8, italics in orginal).

Karl & Schmitter (1991) conclude that elite-led transitions, through pact or imposition, are more likely to produce democracy, although restricted types of democracy, compared to transitions through reform or revolution. Pact making between central actors is thus an essential aspect of transitology. O'Donnell & Schmitter define a pact as:

> an explicit, but not always publicly explicated or justified, agreement among a select set of actors which seeks to define (or, better, to redefine) rules governing the exercise of power on the basis of mutual guarantees for the 'vital interests' of those entering into it (O'Donnell & Schmitter 1986: 37).

Pacts include mutual guarantees for the vital interests of those involved and have three components: a pact includes all politically significant actors and involves a series of agreements that makes the actors dependent upon each other. Initially they are often concerned with procedural issues but will eventually come to embrace more substantial questions. Finally, pacts are at the same time inclusionary and exclusive as they restrict the scope of representation to ensure that the vital interests of the ruling elite will not be threatened (Karl 1990: 9-11). It has been argued that pacts give more certainty to the transition as nobody wins or loses everything. The most common kind of pact is between soft-liners within the authoritarian regime and moderates within the democratic opposition. For example, the military may leave power in exchange for amnesty for abuses of human rights committed during the authoritarian rule. Pacts are however problematic from a democratic point of view, as they restrict the scope of representation and accountability. Paradoxically, then, a pact is a way to initiate democracy by undemocratic means as:

> They are negotiated by a few actors, they reduce competitiveness and accountability, they attempt to structure the agenda of policy concerns, and they distort the principle of citizen equality (Gill 2000: 53).

Thomas Carothers recently wrote an article with the somewhat provocative title *The End of the Transition Paradigm,* in which he argues that whereas transition theory once was useful, today it has "outlived its usefulness" (2002: 6). He criticizes the idea that transitions necessarily lead to democracy, that the process consists of stages, that elections eventually will lead to deepening democracies, that structures would be of less importance, and that state-building is secondary to democracy-building. It is a quite gloomy picture Carothers paints, with a majority of all "transitional" countries trapped in the gray zone between authoritarianism and democracy. Thus, the reality of "transitional" regimes is more critical than transitologists assumed, and a political decision of the central actors is clearly not sufficient for successful democratization (Carothers 2002).[23]

By disregarding structures, transitologists fail to see how the actors involved actually are constrained by the surrounding structures (e.g. Haggard & Kaufman 1999: 75).[24] When structures are neglected the role of the actors is often exaggerated (Gill 2000: 44). When only a very short time-span is analyzed and when everything is uncertain, the choices and decisions made by a small elite seem very interesting. Whereas modernization theories disregarded the actors and came close to some sort of structural reductionism, and consequently found it difficult to explain the initiation of a transition, transitologists tended to overlook how actors' autonomy and capacity to act were restricted by the surrounding structures, and thus engaged in actor reductionism that in an extreme version may result in unrestricted choice or excessive voluntarism (see Lundquist 1987: 38). Thus, both approaches to democratization seem to have weaknesses. Another problem with these approaches to the study of democratization is their inherent ethnocentrism. Let us therefore see how well these approaches to democratization help us understand democratization processes in Central America.

A Note on Democratization in Central America

Functionalism and the ideas of the modernization school were largely based upon the Western experience in terms of economic development and democratization. In the 1960s the modernization school was challenged by the dependency school.[25] After grave criticism from the dependency school, among others, the modernists revised their theories and argued that there were many possible roads to democracy and development, and that the road taken by the West was not always the best one for the Third World. Accordingly, transitology—being a reaction to the modernization school—avoided such general statements. Yet, transitologists drew their experience mainly from Southern Europe in the 1970s and South America in the 1980s. Against this background, the question of whether these theories are applicable to the Central American region must be raised.[26]

The Central American cases not only differ from the West, but the region is also different from South America and the Caribbean. O'Donnell and Schmitter's analysis (1986), for example, is primarily based upon the experiences of Southern Europe and the Southern Cone, countries that have a democratic past.[27] Thus, the transitions constituted a return to democratic rule. In Central America, prior experience of democracy is limited; with the exception of Costa Rica, the only democratic periods occurred in Guatemala 1944-1954 and Honduras 1957-1963. Moreover, Central America is different from the neighboring South America in another regard; the region does not have the mass-based unions and political parties that existed in the South and that were capable of countering the interests of the economic elite and the military. In Central America, many popular organizations have been the target of government repression since the beginning of the 1930s (Biekart 1999: 27). The mode of transition is also unique for Central America. In this region, transitions to democracy became inter-linked with transitions to peace. The elections in El Salvador (1982, 1984) and in Guatemala (1984, 1985) were held while civil war was still going on, and with continued state repression (Biekart 1999: 29).

In addition, Karl notes that one difference between Central America and South America is the relative influence of the United States. No other part of the world has been so (asymmetrically) integrated into the U.S. political

and economic system as Central America and the Caribbean, and no other part of the world has been more dependent on the United States (Karl 1995: 77; see also Lowenthal 2000: 50-51). Moreover, Central America is clearly a poorer region than South America. With the exception of Costa Rica, more than half of the population in the Central American republics lives in extreme poverty (Karl 1995: 78).

> The Central American countries are connected by a common thread of fear—the product of years of authoritarian rule, war, and state terror. To an extent not seen elsewhere in contemporary South America, even in Argentina, Central Americans have had to learn to live under extraordinarily abnormal conditions, in which pain, insecurity, and suspicion predominate (Karl 1995: 79).

Hence a good rule of thumb when analyzing democratic development in Central America is that, even though our understanding is guided by the theoretical framework laid out in the text, we have to be observant of the unique characteristics of Central American societies and integrate them into our framework. The research strategy of letting the theoretical arguments be informed by the empirical reality will hopefully be helpful in the sense that we use existing theories to understand the empirical case, and perhaps also refine them so that they could better capture the democratization processes in Central America.

Summary

In this chapter it has been argued that Dahl's polyarchy provides a conception of democracy that is not restricted to institutional arrangements for the election of decision-makers, but still provides a useful tool in empirical analysis. However, considering the Latin American context with its often-problematic civil-military relations and informal clientelist practices, we adhere to O'Donnell's two amendments to the polyarchy model, which refer to elected politicians' *de facto* control over the political power, and civilian control over the armed forces.

The chapter has also discussed different theoretical approaches to the study of democratization. The main divide between theories of democra-

tization runs between those that focus on the underlying conditions for democracy, such as economic development, cultural traditions, institutional design or class structure, and those that focus on the actual transition to democracy—the actors involved and their respective strengths, positions and strategies. In essence, it is a question of whether structure or agency is seen as the prime mover in society. There is also a difference in the epistemological stance—whereas the structural theories have a more positivistic approach, transitology emphasizes the lack of general rules. Both positions have also encountered difficulties. For example, structural theories have difficulties to explain the dynamic moment (i.e. why a transition is initiated), and the actor-oriented theories ignore the structures and how actors' choices and preferences are shaped by structures.

This brief overview of democratization theories provides an important background for the study of civil society's democracy-building functions in the post-transition period. In order to be able to reach an understanding of the post-transition setting, we need a clear definition of democracy and an understanding of the transition to democracy. With this discussion of democracy and democratization in mind, let us now turn to the post-transition setting.

Notes

1 For a discussion of democracy, the interested reader should consult for example Robert Dahl (1989) and David Held (1996).

2 David Collier & Steven Levitsky suggest a strategy of diminished subtypes to avoid conceptual stretching and obtain analytical differentiation at the same time. Diminished subtypes are incomplete forms of democracy, because they lack some defining attributes. By specifying the missing attributes, the analytical differentiation is increased. One example of a diminished subtype is "illiberal democracy" (1997: 437-442). This strategy has resemblances to David Collier & James E. McMahon's discussion of radial categories (1993: 848-852).

3 Actually Karl (1990) advocates a middle-range definition of democracy.

4 Following the same idea, Karl argues for a middle-range specification of democracy: "'a set of institutions that permits the entire adult population to act as citizens by choosing their leading decision makers in competitive, fair, and regularly scheduled elections which are held in the context of the rule of law, guarantees for political freedom, and limited military prerogatives.' Specified in this manner, democracy is a political concept involving several dimensions: (1) contestation over policy and political competition for office; (2) participation

of the citizenry through partisan, associational, and other forms of collective action; (3) accountability of rulers to the ruled through mechanisms of representation and the rule of law; and (4) civilian control over the military" (Karl 1990: 2).

5 The modernization perspective is a much wider concept than the set of theories presented here. It embraces sociological, anthropological, economic and psychological approaches as well. The modernization school adopted both evolutionary and functionalist ideas to develop theories that could explain modernization in the Third World. Among the most famous is Walt Rostow's study from 1964 (*The Takeoff into Self-Sustained Growth*) in which he compares development with the take-off of an airplane. So identifies some theoretical assumptions that are shared by the modernization theorists: modernization is a phased process, it is a homogenizing process, and it represents a Europeanization or Americanization. Moreover, modernization is an irreversible, progressive, and lengthy process. In addition, based on functionalist theory, modernization is a systematic, transformative, and immanent process (So 1990: 17-34).

6 Economic growth generates an increase in the level of education, as there are more resources to invest in education. Education broadens people's outlooks, generates tolerance and makes them stay away from extremist ideologies. A high level of education is not a sufficient, yet a necessary condition for democracy. Moreover, as a result of a growing wealth, a middle class is likely to emerge and a diamond-shaped society replaces the more traditional pyramid-shaped society. Lipset also argues that a higher degree of wealth makes the population more receptive to democratic values and norms. Due to the increase of wealth, a generous welfare policy is possible and minor changes in the distribution of wealth are less important than in poor societies. Lipset also argues that increased wealth generates greater tolerance from other classes towards the poor sections. In a wealthy and modern society, there is also less space for nepotism. The emergence of a middle class coincides with the emergence of organizations that may serve as a vital counterweight to the state, and organizational activity may be a method to train citizens in the "skills in politics" and thereby increase citizen participation. In contrast to a traditional society, a modern society is more complex and consequently comprises several crosscutting cleavages that reduce social conflict and political extremism (Lipset 1959).

7 Effectiveness here refers to performance, i.e. if the system delivers what the citizens expect and desire, such as economic growth for example. See an elaborated discussion in Chapter Three.

8 According to Diamond a country with per capita GNP between US$ 2,346 and US$ 5,000 (in 1980) is categorized as a middle-income country (Diamond 1992a: 107).

9 All sovereign states in Latin America, the Caribbean, Africa, Asia and Oceania except for OECD countries were included, in total 132 cases.

10 Their conclusion concerning the relation between capitalist development and democracy includes other factors than class structures, such as the relation between the state and the dominant classes. The state must be strong and autonomous to avoid being captured by other dominant groups, but must at the same time be counterbalanced by a strong civil society. Another important factor for democratic development is the timing of capitalist development, and transnational power structures in the world economy (Rueschemeyer et al. 1992: 270-276).

11 See for example Almond & Verba (1989), Muller & Seligson (1994), Inglehart (1988) and Diamond (1994a).

12 This is of course a simplification of the discussion. Muller & Seligson are not satisfied with Inglehart's conceptualization of civic culture (because he includes life satisfaction, which was not originally included in Almond & Verba's analysis), and therefore they "unpack" the composite index of civic culture (1994: 636). See Fukuyama (1995) for a discussion of the meaning of trust.

13 See for example Linz (1990a), Linz (1990b), Linz (1994), Shugart & Carey (1992), Stepan & Skach (1994) and Horowitz (1990).

14 The major difference between parliamentary systems and presidential ones is that whereas the former is characterized by mutual dependence, the latter is characterized by mutual independence. In parliamentary systems the executive power is dependent upon support from the legislative power and can be forced to resign if they lose a vote of confidence. The executive power can also dissolve the parliament and arrange new elections (Stepan & Skach 1994: 120). In a presidential system, the executive has a special mandate from the electorate that gives it legitimacy. The president is independent from the legislative power as he is elected directly.

15 For a detailed discussion of the debate see Shugart & Carey (1992), Linz (1990a), (1990b) and (1994). Mainwaring included the meaning of the party system in the analysis, and found that the combination of presidentialism and multiparty system "makes stable democracy difficult to sustain" (1993: 199). The reason is that a multiparty system increases the likelihood of executive-legislative deadlock, increases the risk for ideological polarization and makes coalition building necessary. But coalition building is harder in presidential systems as compared to parliamentary systems (1993: 212-213).

16 The first phase that initiates the transition is what Rustow calls the "preparatory phase" in which a prolonged political struggle takes place when a new elite emerges. Democracy is not necessarily the primary goal of the new elites, but it could be seen as a means to achieve another end. Polarization is the hallmark of the preparatory phase. The following phase is a "decision phase" in which the political leaders make a deliberate decision to institutionalize the rules of democracy. This decision is likely to be the result of negotiations among the elites, i.e. a deliberated explicit consensus. Finally, this institutionalization of the formal democratic rules is followed by a "habituation phase" in which people get used to solving all major questions by democratic procedures, a process that may go upward and downward (Rustow 1970: 350-360).

17 For a discussion of Rustow's seminal study see e.g. Anderson (ed.) (1999).

18 See e.g. O'Donnell, Schmitter & Whitehead (1986), O'Donnell & Schmitter (1986), Przeworski (1991), Karl (1990), Karl & Schmitter (1991) and Huntington (1991).

19 Functionalist theories such as the modernization school had a strong influence not only over science but over policy as well. Foreign aid was at the time heavily inspired by the modernization school and based upon the belief that the best way for the Third World to develop was by doing it the same way as did the West. This was not only ethnocentric but also harmful. The dependency school later evolved as a reaction against the modernization school (see e.g. So 1990). See footnote 25 for an elaborated discussion.

20 Huntington uses the concepts radical extremists and democratic moderates in the opposition and democratizers, liberals and standpatters in the authoritarian regime (1991: 122).

21 Scott Mainwaring gives an overview of different ways of categorizing modes of transition. He discusses, among others, Baloyra's typology of early-internal, delayed-external, delayed-internal, and late external transitions. Morlino's typology from 1978 is based upon nine variables, including e.g. the duration of the transition and the continuity in administrative and judiciary positions, i.e. the continuity of the elite. However, with all possible combinations, we still have 512 possible outcomes. Mainwaring himself maintains a three-fold categorization; transition by regime defeat, transition through extrication, and transition through transaction (1992: 317-323).

22 It should be noted that Karl (1990) does not ignore structures. She advances a perspective of "structured contingency". Social structures place restrictions and opportunities on the actors and their choices. Thus, Karl could not be accused of being trapped in the actor reductionism.

23 Carothers' article provoked strong reactions. See for example O'Donnell's response (2002).

24 Haggard & Kaufman argue that transitologists also ignore economic variables. In their view, economic conditions have an influence on the timing and terms of transitions and post-transition development. "Though [economic] crises are neither necessary nor sufficient to account for authoritarian withdrawal, poor economic performance reduces the bargaining power of authoritarian incumbents and increases the strength of oppositions" (Haggard & Kaufman 1999: 77). The economic legacy of the authoritarian regime has an influence on the prospects and policy agenda of the new democratic regime (Haggard & Kaufman 1999: 88-89).

25 The dependency school, or *dependencia* emerged as a reaction to the ideas of the modernization school, the failure of ECLA (U.N. Economic Commission for Latin America), which promoted a development strategy based on protectionism and industrialization through import substitution, and the crisis of orthodox Marxism in Latin America (So 1990: 91-93). The core idea of the dependency school, which drew heavily on neo-Marxism, was that the lack of development was due to colonialism and neocolonialism. Countries in the Third World could not follow the example of the West, because they had been colonies and subject to foreign intervention. In modern times, the exploitation of the Third World continued through an extraction of the economic surplus. Thus, underdevelopment was a consequence of the colonial domination. André Gunder Frank, for example, outlined a metropolis-satellite model to explain underdevelopment in the Third World. The general idea was to show how economic surplus was extracted from the satellites to the metropolis. This was not only a model of the international system; the metropolis-satellite relation existed within the satellites as well (see So 1990: 91-109).

26 It could of course be argued that at a sufficiently high level of abstraction every theory is applicable to any empirical case. However, the question is what purpose this serves—a theory reduced to a few abstract principles does not say very much and hardly contributes to increase our understandings of actual political processes.

27 Democracy was established in Chile and Uruguay between World War I and World War II. See John Peeler for a discussion of the early democracies in Latin America (1998: 43-73).

Chapter Three

Democratic Development in Post-Transition Societies

> If the shallow, troubled, and recently established democracies of the world do not move forward, to strengthen their political institutions, improve their democratic functioning, and generate more active, positive, and deeply felt commitments of support at the elite and mass levels, they are likely to move backward, into deepening pathologies that will eventually plunge their political systems below the threshold of electoral democracy or overturn them altogether (Diamond 1999: 64).

A transition to democracy rarely results in a flawless democracy. Actually, the tendency is quite the reverse. A considerable number of the newly established democracies reveal serious democratic deficits and vulnerabilities. A majority of the "third wave democracies" have not established a well-functioning democracy (Carothers 2002: 9). In many of these new democracies, democratic elections co-exist with remnant authoritarian traditions such as clientelism and patrimonialism, an arbitrary exercise of power, low regime performance and low trust in and support for the democratic system. Given the weakness of many new democratic regimes, several theorists have recognized that there is an omnipresent peril of a regression to authoritarian rule (see e.g. Linz 1978). As Samuel P. Huntington's analysis shows, the first two "waves of democratization" have been followed by reverse waves back into authoritarian rule (1991). In the same vein, Robert A. Pastor has shown how Latin America has experienced swings of the political pendulum back and forth between democracy and dictatorship (1989).

In the last decade the overall quality of the newly established democracies and the peril of democratic breakdowns have attracted considerable attention from scholars concerned with democratic development, as well as from policy-makers such as the donor community engaged in democ-

racy promotion. As a result, a new academic sub-discipline concerned with issues of democratic stability and democratic survival emerged, so-called consolidation studies. Democratic consolidation, in brief, refers to the durability and survival of a democratic regime. Consolidation studies have, however, been fiercely criticized, because the concept of consolidation is a teleological concept (O'Donnell 1996a; 1996b) and because of the lack of a common understanding of the concept (Schedler 1998a).

Taking this critique seriously, this chapter suggests that we should avoid the concept of democratic consolidation. What we are interested in is democratic development in newly established democracies, and three aspects of democratic development are here identified as particularly important: political institutionalization, regime performance, and development of legitimacy for the democratic regime.

Democratic Consolidation

As Huntington (1991) and Pastor (1989) have shown, safeguarding democracy is not an easy task. In the aftermath of the heydays of "the transition paradigm", it soon became evident that, despite a successful transition, there was no guarantee that the new democracy would survive. A concern for strengthening and stabilizing, or "consolidating", new democracies consequently emerged. Once consolidated, democracy is less likely to break down, because it can resist severe challenges (see e.g. Gunther et al. 1995: xiii). However, consolidation is no guarantee against democratic breakdowns—a consolidated democracy could de-consolidate.

The process of democratic consolidation is regarded as conceptually different from the transition. Following this idea, O'Donnell has argued that it is fruitful to analyze democratization in terms of two transitions, the first being the transition from authoritarian rule to the inauguration of a democratic government and the second being the consolidation of the new democracy (1992: 18). Consequently, a transition results in the creation of a new democratic regime, whereas a consolidation results "in the stability and persistence of that regime" (Gunther et al. 1995: 3). The process of democratic consolidation is thus not seen as a prolongation of the transition. It is a process that "engages different actors, behaviors, processes,

values, and resources" (Schmitter 1995: 12). Even though transition and consolidation are conceptually distinct aspects of democratization, they may overlap temporally (see e.g. Gunther et al. 1995: 3; Plasser et al. 1998: 10).

There are many different notions of democratic consolidation. One approach is the so-called "two-election test", perhaps better known as the "transfer-of-power test". A democracy is considered to be consolidated when the first democratically elected government is defeated in free and fair elections, and accepts the defeat. Advocates of this notion of consolidation assume that if a transfer of power occurs, then the major political actors will accept the rules of the game. One problem with this approach, as David Beetham (1994) notes, is that in some countries, e.g. Japan, the electorate continues to vote for the same party even though there is competition. Another approach is the so-called "generation test" or "longevity test", which is concerned with the continuity of the democratic institutions. From this perspective, a democratic regime is seen as consolidated if the democratic core institutions have existed for a certain number of years (Beetham 1994). This approach is primarily concerned with the effective functioning of the democratic institutions and procedures. However, the fact that a democratic system has existed for a certain number of years does not say anything about the chances that it will survive in the nearest future (ibid.).

Another notion of democratic consolidation is mainly concerned with the perceived legitimacy of the democratic regime and the attitudinal support. Juan J. Linz's well-known "only-game-in-town definition" of a consolidated democracy is an example of this:

> [A consolidated democracy] is one in which none of the major political actors, parties, or organized interests, forces, or institutions consider that there is any alternative to democratic processes to gain power, and that no political institution or group has a claim to veto the action of democratically elected decision makers. This does not mean that there are no minorities ready to challenge and question the legitimacy of the democratic process by non democratic means. It means, however, that the major actors do not turn to them and that they remain politically isolated. To put it simply, democracy must be seen as "the only game in town" (Linz 1990c: 158).

The "only-game-in-town definition" has later been developed by Juan J. Linz & Alfred Stepan, who argue that democracy is the only game in town *attitudinally*, when a majority of the population consider democracy to be the best political system to be ruled by, even in times when the performance of the government is low; *behaviorally*, when no major political actor tries to overthrow the democratically elected government, and the government does not have to devote all their resources to fighting non-democratic groups; and *constitutionally*, when all parties in society learn to solve, and get used to solving, conflicts within the democratic rules and norms (Linz & Stepan 1996: 5).[1] Larry Diamond argues, in the same vein, that democratic consolidation is a process of achieving legitimacy (1999: 65). According to him, durability and survival are actually the consequences of democratic consolidation. Diamond's point is that the conceptual foundations must be separated from the consequences if we want to avoid tautological reasoning. Diamond expresses it as follows:

> At bottom, I believe consolidation is most usefully construed as the process of achieving broad and deep legitimation, such that all significant political actors, at both the elite and mass levels, believe that the democratic regime is the most right and appropriate for their society, better than any other realistic alternative they can imagine […] At the mass level, there must be a broad normative and behavioral consensus […] Legitimation, in this sense involves more than normative commitment. It must also be evident and routinized in behavior (Diamond 1999: 65).

For Michael Burton, Richard Gunther & John Higley, democratic consolidation refers to an elite consensus on the democratic procedures and institutions, followed by extensive mass participation in democratic elections and other institutional processes (Burton et al. 1992: 3-4). The "legitimacy approach" to democratic consolidation could be compared with Dankwart A. Rustow's habituation phase, which was described in Chapter Two, when all citizens get used to solving disputes democratically (see Rustow 1970: 350-360; Diamond 1999: 65). There are, of course, many other conceptions of democratic consolidation than the ones accounted for

here. But let us now turn to the critique that has been directed against the literature on democratic consolidation.

Consolidation—A Multiplicity of Meanings

> The aspiring subdiscipline of "consolidology" is anchored in an unclear, inconsistent, and unbounded concept, and thus it is not anchored at all, but drifting in murky waters (Schedler 1998a: 92).

Democratic consolidation is in a way a seductive concept, but as Andreas Schedler argues "[…] much of its successful career was built upon the quicksand of semantic ambiguity" (2001: 66). The concept of democratic consolidation has been stretched and come to mean different things to different scholars. One reason for this conceptual confusion is that scholars work in different empirical contexts. While some work in liberal democracies, others work in semi-democracies or hybrid democracies and, consequently, the focus is either on democratic progress or on democratic survival (Schedler 1998a: 92-93). Schedler argues that the original meaning of the concept of democratic consolidation was democratic survival in the sense of avoiding democratic breakdown and regression into authoritarian rule, or, in his own words:

> making new democracies secure, of extending their life expectancy beyond the short term, of making them immune against the threat of authoritarian regression, of building dams against eventual "reverse waves" (Schedler 1998a: 91).

But as the subdiscipline developed, it came to embrace other processes as well, and eventually it included such diverse processes as the elimination of non-democratic institutions, the decentralization of state power and the development of a democratic political culture.

Clearly, the concept of democratic consolidation has many meanings. One major dividing line goes between those who have a negative notion of democratic consolidation, i.e. those who are concerned with avoiding breakdown of the new democracy, through a sudden breakdown or slow

erosion, and those who have a positive notion, i.e. those who are concerned with democratic advance or progress in terms of deepening democracy (Schedler 1998a: 93-100). Avoiding breakdown means securing the core democratic institutions that have been established during the transition, and reducing the probability of breakdown. From this perspective the main concern is to prevent sudden deaths and to remove anti-democratic actors such as the military (Schedler 1998a: 93-96).[2] Another negative notion of democratic consolidation is concerned with avoiding an erosion of democracy, which refers to "less spectacular, more incremental, and less transparent forms of regression" (Schedler 1998a: 97). This type of danger does not lead to a sudden breakdown of democracy, but rather to a slow erosion that may result in a regression to some kind of hybrid system (Schedler 1997: 11-16; 1998a: 97-98). Guillermo O'Donnell describes these silent regressions, or slow deaths, that characterize the democratic erosion as a:

> progressive diminution of existing spaces for the exercise of civilian power and the effectiveness of the classic guarantees of liberal constitutionalism (O'Donnell 1992: 19).

The negative notions of democratic consolidation are thus primarily concerned with anti-democratic institutions and actors and non-elected actors' influence on the political process. The military is one example of such a non-elected actor frequently cited. The military is, of course, not an anti-democratic element *per se*, but civil-military relations have clearly been a problem for new democracies, especially in many Latin American cases (see e.g. Cruz & Diamint 1998). Samuel J. Valenzuela mentions tutelary powers as one example of factors that undermine the institutionalization of democracy. Tutelary powers refers to a situation in which elected politicians are subordinated to non-elected elites. The military is often found in such a tutelary role, formally or informally.[3] Consequently, elected politicians cannot rule without the consent of the military. The example of Chile is of course a case in point (Valenzuela 1992: 63-64). Another example is the existence of reserved domains of authority and policy making. This concerns the specific areas that are outside the control of the elected officials. Although the actors behind the removal of the

reserved domains from the control of elected politicians are not always the military, this is often the case. These actors are not subject to electoral accountability.[4] Tutelary powers and reserved domains could be the result of a tacit agreement, or pact making, that might have facilitated the transition from authoritarian rule (Valenzuela 1992: 62-65).

Military autonomy poses a threat to a newly established democracy, since it implies a lack of civilian control over the activities of the armed forces. For example, if elected civilian politicians cannot review or control the military budget, promotions, training programs, military doctrine, deployment of units, or intelligence service, then the military is regarded as autonomous. In addition, a military judicial system that tries all cases (regardless of their nature) is an example of military autonomy, according to Valenzuela (1992: 87). The autonomy that the military secured for themselves in many transitions, and their sovereignty over the military sector, including self-defined rules, unquestionably poses a problem for democratic consolidation:

> Civilian democratic governments are therefore kept from exercising effective authority over a large and important segment of the state, which often includes the powerful military intelligence organizations overdeveloped during the authoritarian period (Agüero 1992: 155).

In brief, then, the military has created autonomy for itself, and thereby prevented elected officials from exercising civilian control over military affairs. This situation is often caused by the military's control of the transition, by the existence of national security doctrines, by the absence of a supportive international context and, finally, by weak civilian leadership and flaws in civilian institutions (Agüero 1992: 179-180).[5]

The positive notions of democratic consolidation, on the other hand, are concerned with the process of completing or advancing democracy. From this perspective democratic consolidation could be regarded as a completion of an incomplete transition, i.e. the development of an electoral democracy. When different types of hybrid democracies (e.g. democracies with constitutional defects, with hegemonic parties or illiberal democracies) constitute the empirical cases, democratic consolidation denotes the transformation of these hybrid systems into liberal

democracies that guarantee political, civil, and human rights (Schedler 1998a: 97-99). This notion of democratic consolidation presupposes a minimalist definition of democracy, because with a broader conception of democracy the process of transforming an illiberal democracy into a liberal democracy would be regarded as part of the transition. Another positive notion of consolidation is the process of deepening democracy, or developing liberal democracy into advanced democracy. When Western democracies are compared to Latin American democracies, the latter demonstrate several shortcomings, e.g. a lack of a vital democratic civil society and of a democratic political culture, or inefficient public administration. Survival is not an acute problem for these democracies, but still there is a problem with democratic quality in terms of civic participation and democratic political culture (Schedler 1997: 21-25; 1998a: 99-100).

Democratic consolidation is admittedly an ambiguous concept that seems to lack a core meaning. As Schedler's categorization into the different notions of democratic consolidation clearly illustrates, it means different things to different scholars. The lack of a common understanding is, of course, a serious problem. We do not know what the concept means to other students of democratization, and this could hamper our understanding and attempts to develop theory (Schedler 1998a: 92). The literature on democratic consolidation has also been fiercely criticized on the grounds that the causes are hard to separate from the defining characteristics of democratic consolidation (see e.g. Diamond 1999: 74), and we easily end up in teleological reasoning. The problem of teleology is therefore due to the fact that consolidation denotes both the process and the final destination (Schedler 1998a; O'Donnell 1996a; 1996b). Scholars have used different strategies to conceal this problem—Diamond (1999), for example, speaks of "*tasks* of democratic consolidation" and Linz & Stepan argue that "consolidated democracies need to have in place five interacting *arenas* to reinforce one another in order for such consolidation to exist" (Linz & Stepan 1996: 7, italics added). This seems to be an attempt to camouflage the teleological flavor of the concept.

Another problem with democratic consolidation is that the approach involves a "forward-looking" or a "future-oriented" perspective. Students of consolidation try to assess the life expectancy of the democratic regimes

under investigation. In contrast to those who study and try to explain the stability of historical cases, students of democratic consolidation deal with uncertain scenarios and engage in some sort of hypothetical reasoning when they analyze whether a case is consolidated enough so that it will not break down in the foreseeable future (Schedler 1998b).

Against this background we must ask ourselves whether the concept of democratic consolidation brings analytical clarity to the present study, or whether it only causes conceptual confusion. Admittedly, the inherent vagueness of the concept—the lack of a core meaning, the teleological character and the future-oriented perspective—could weaken the analysis. How, then, can we proceed with a study of democratic development in post-transition societies? As argued in the introduction of this chapter, many newly established democracies are afflicted with serious democratic deficits. Democratic procedures co-exist with remnant authoritarian enclaves, corruption and low citizen support for the democratic system. These new democratic systems must therefore become more institutionalized, more effective and more legitimate, both among the political elite and the mass public. Three aspects of democratic development stand out as particularly urgent for new fragile democracies: political institutionalization, regime performance and legitimacy (see Diamond 1999 for a similar categorization). One could, of course, imagine other aspects of democratic development in post-transition societies. Valenzuela, for instance, emphasizes the moderation of political conflict, the management of social conflict and subordinating the military to civilian authority (1992: 82-93). Linz & Stepan stress stateness, nationalism and ethnic composition as important aspects (1996: 16-37). However, it seems reasonable to argue that these aspects are important for most newly established democracies.

Political Institutionalization

Several of the newly established democracies lack a fit between formal rules and actual behavior. Patrimonialism, and delegative visions and practices often co-exist with formal democratic procedures (see e.g. O'Donnell 1996a: 38-45; Diamond et al. 1999). Moreover, political institutions in newly established democracies often perform poorly, lacking the experience, resources, and

capacity to function as they are supposed to. Political society therefore needs to be institutionalized. Political society here refers to political parties, legislatures, elections and electoral rules (i.e. representative and governmental institutions), the bureaucracy, rule of law and the judicial system (see Diamond 1999: 93; Linz & Stepan 1996: 8). Institutionalization of political society refers to the process of making political society more institutionalized, predictable and routinized and could be defined as:

> strengthening the formal representative and governmental structures of democracy so that they become more coherent, complex, autonomous, and adaptable and thus more capable, effective, valued, and binding (Diamond 1999: 75).[6]

In essence, political institutionalization is the process in which the institutions become known, practiced and accepted, and in which a reasonable fit between the formal rules and political behavior evolves. In many newly established democracies the major threat to a functioning democracy is not the military, but rather participants in the democratic process (see e.g. Huntington 1997: 8). As a result, support for the democratic regime may erode. Let us therefore briefly touch upon the following particularly important aspects of political institutionalization: horizontal accountability and the rule of law, effective, representative and legitimate institutions of governance, and a transparent public administration.

Rule of Law and Horizontal Accountability

One particularly important task of political institutionalization is to strengthen the rule of law (see e.g. Diamond 1999: 111-112; Linz & Stepan 1996: 10-11; Ungar 2002). According to Mark Ungar, there cannot be a democracy without the rule of law, because a constitution is ineffective without a judiciary that supports it (2002: 1). Rule of law is a contested concept, but Pilar Domingo suggests a straightforward definition that is sufficient for our purpose:

> Rule of law is in place when government is constrained or bound by the law—through effective limits or checks and balances on political

> power and public office, usually prescribed in a constitutional format (Domingo 1999: 152).

Rule of law requires an independent and effectively functioning judiciary, an accountable and law-abiding state and judicial access for all citizens (Ungar 2002: 1-2). An independent and effectively functioning juridical system is indispensable for the enforcement of law and for the defense of citizens' political and civil rights (Ciurlizza 2000: 211-216; Domingo 1999: 153-154). Governments, civil servants, police officers and military personnel can only be held accountable if there is an independent and effectively functioning judicial system that ensures the rule of law (Diamond 1999: 111-112). However, as Diamond argues, the judicial system and the police are elements that are often overlooked within democratization studies (1999: 94). In order to be functioning well, the judicial system should be seen as legitimate by a majority of the citizens, it should be accessible for all citizens, it should be independent and ensure basic fairness and, finally, it should be efficient (Sieder & Costello 1996: 170).

In many new democracies the judiciaries do not function effectively or independently, but are rather "paralyzed by corruption, infrastructural disabilities, questionable jurisprudence, incomplete legislation, and political interference" (Ungar 2002: 1). Weak judiciaries are often a consequence of the executive's strong influence over the judicial branch and its attempts to control and manipulate the judicial system. As a result, judiciaries cannot function effectively due to bias, corruption and delays (see Ciurlizza 2000: 217; Ungar 2002: 2-3).[7] Politicization and other forms of manipulation of the judicial system are signs of weak horizontal accountability, which refers to certain state agencies' control over other state agencies, and delegative rule. Horizontal accountability enables political institutions such as the judicial power to check abuses committed by other branches of the government. Thus, horizontal accountability impedes institutions or high officials, e.g. military personnel or civil servants, from acting autonomously (see O'Donnell 1996a: 44-45; O'Donnell 1999; Schedler et al. 1999: 3). Andreas Schedler, Larry Diamond & Mark F. Plattner argue that the *locus classicus* of horizontal accountability is the relations between the executive, legislative and judicial powers (1999: 3). However, in many new

democracies "the executive makes strenuous, and often, successful efforts to erode whatever horizontal accountability does exist" (O'Donnell 1996a: 44). With a weak and politically controlled judicial power there will be no sanctions against abuses of power, or against delegative or clientelistic practices. Thus, strengthening the rule of law and horizontal accountability is a crucial aspect of political institutionalization.

A Transparent Public Administration

An efficient and professionalized transparent public administration is another element in the institutionalization of political society (see e.g. Linz & Stepan 1996: 10-11; Diamond 1999: 93-96). One criterion for an institutionalized public administration is a clear distinction between the public and the private. Rulers and civil servants are not above the law but subject to it, and their actions should accordingly be subordinated to the law. Transparency in the public realm is indispensable for any democracy, so that citizens can evaluate the rulers and ratify or reject them in a general election. However, in many new democracies, the distinction between the private and the public is blurred, and an authoritarian culture with traditions of clientelism and patrimonialism in the public sphere dominates. Patrimonialism not only undermines the efficiency of the democratic institutions, but is also likely to weaken the legitimacy of the democratic system among the citizens (see e.g. O'Donnell 1992: 39).

Corruption in the broadest sense refers to the misuse of public power for private gain (Rose-Ackerman 1999).[8] It refers to cases when officials accept, solicit, or extort bribes, or when individuals offer bribes to officials. Patronage and nepotism are regarded as corrupt behavior (Blomkvist 2001: 236-237). Corruption clearly undermines the efficient implementation of policies, efficient use of the public resources and citizens' trust in the public administration. It is also associated with lower levels of investments and economic growth (Rose-Ackerman 1999). Transparency and skilled and professional civil servants are therefore necessary components for an efficient and functioning public administration. The existence of corruption also actualizes the importance of an effective and independent judicial system that deals with corruption cases, even if the

perpetrator is a government official or a police officer (Tulchin & Espach 2000: 8-9). If the judicial system is corrupt and dependent on the executive branch, it may facilitate high-level corruption (Rose-Ackerman 1999: 151). One example of institutionalizing the judicial system and the bureaucracy is reforming the police force. If the police force is corrupt, unaccountable and abusive during the authoritarian regime, it is important to remove it from military control and transform it into an accountable and professional police force (Diamond 1999: 94-95).

Effective and Representative Institutions of Governance

The institutions of democratic governance, i.e. the party system, legislatures and electoral systems, must also be strengthened (Diamond 1999: 96). An elected legislature is an essential institution in a democratic system. In many new democracies, however, the legislatures are weak due to a lack of resources and committed members. In order for the legislatures to function effectively, they need financial resources and experienced, committed and skillful members and staff (Diamond 1999: 98-99). It is, of course, important that the electoral system provides clean and fair elections. There is a vast literature on "constitutional design" as described in Chapter Two, and it has, for example, been argued that majoritarian systems are not suitable for societies with deep ethnic, religious or other types of cleavages. Every electoral system has its pros and cons. If the electoral system fits the country badly, there is always the possibility of an electoral reform (see Diamond 1999: 99-111). Nevertheless, in many new democracies the problem is not the electoral system *per se*, but rather politicians' and other actors' attempts to manipulate the electoral process, often with subtle means, for example through clientelist control of poor voters (i.e. vote buying), practical suffrage restrictions (e.g. identification requirements), or attempts to exclude opponents from participation (Schedler 2002).

Political parties constitute a central factor in a democratic system (e.g. Diamond 1999; Linz & Stepan 1996; Lipset 2000). Despite a decline in party membership and party activism (e.g. Gallagher 1997: 125-127), and despite the fact that new forms of citizen participation in less traditional channels have gained more importance (e.g. Diamond 1999:

96), political parties remain an important link between the state and the citizens. Parties can play an important role in representing and articulating the interests of constituencies, in aggregating demands, recruiting new leaders, setting a policy-agenda, and forming government. The tasks of political parties often overlap with those of civil society, but Linz & Stepan insist on upholding the differences between civil society and political society (political parties). They complement each other, and both are needed for a functioning democracy (1996: 17):

> Institutionalized party systems thus increase democratic governability and legitimacy by facilitating legislative support for government policies; by channeling demands and conflicts through established procedures; by reducing the scope for populist demagogues to win power; and by making the democratic process more inclusive, accessible, representative, and effective (Diamond 1997: xxiii).

It is important to note that an over-institutionalized party system or a frozen party system (see Kitschelt 1997), such as the Venezuelan "partyarchy", and with extremely low electoral volatility is not conducive to democratic governance (Diamond 1999: 96-97). The emergence of new political parties and electoral volatility is rather a sign of a functioning democracy. In some new democracies, however, the existing parties are associated with the previous authoritarian regime, or do not penetrate society and lack a popular base. They are often heavily clientelistic (Diamond & Linz 1989: 21). Hence political parties should be rooted in society and enjoy popular support, but not be too rigid or frozen, or clientelistic.

An institutionalized political society is an indispensable part of a well-functioning democracy. We have stressed the importance of a rule of law and horizontal accountability, the institutionalization of the core institutions of governance, and a transparent and efficient public administration. In essence, this is a question of institutional or political performance (Diamond 1999: 87-93).[9] Effectively functioning democratic institutions and procedures, for example the judicial system, are likely to increase citizens' confidence in the democratic system (see e.g. Turner & Martz 1997; Morlino & Montero 1995: 234; Lipset 1959). Let us now turn to a discussion of regime performance and the perceived legitimacy of the democratic regime.

Regime Performance

Regime performance refers to the capacity of the regime to deliver what the citizens expect and desire (Diamond & Linz 1989: 44). Regime performance can thus be interpreted as positive policy outcomes. What constitutes a positive policy outcome is, of course, context-dependent. Yet perhaps we could agree that certain things, e.g. economic growth and citizen security, are considered to be positive policy outcomes in most contexts.

Economic growth and socioeconomic development, i.e. improvements in living standards that are equally distributed, are examples of regime performance that could generate legitimacy for the democratic system. This is the traditional argument proposed by modernization theorists like Seymour Martin Lipset that was described in Chapter Two. The chief argument is that economic development generates and sustains democracy. Effective political systems, i.e. systems that perform well in terms of economic development, and particularly prolonged effectiveness are likely to generate legitimate political systems (Lipset 1959: 86). In the same vein, Adam Przeworski, Michael Alvarez, José Cheibub & Fernando Limongi argue that economic performance in terms of economic growth and distribution increases the democracy's chances to endure (1996: 41). They argue that the modernization theory was wrong in assuming that economic development in authoritarian regimes would foster democracy, but right in assuming that, once established, it is more likely to survive in a wealthy country (Przeworski et al. 1996: 49).[10] Democracy is likely to survive in poorer countries as well, as long as they generate economic growth with a moderate inflation (Przeworski et al. 1996: 42). In the same vein, Mark J. Gasiorowski & Timothy J. Power (1998) argue that in combination with the diffusion or contagion effect of neighboring democratic countries, development-related socioeconomic factors and high inflation are conducive to democratic development.[11] But there is also a distributive dimension of economic performance. If it is only the small wealthy elite that gets richer, the legitimacy of the regime is likely to erode (Diamond 1999: 80). Przeworski and his coauthors reached the conclusion that democracy is likely to survive when inequality declines over time.[12] Increased inequality can accentuate political tension as well as political disaffection and fragmentation, which can

be harmful, particularly in a fragile new democracy (Diamond 1999: 80-82). Thus, an extreme concentration of wealth, persistent and increasing poverty and increasing inequality are examples of bad regime performance that can erode the legitimacy of the democratic regime.

But regime performance is not only a matter of economic performance. One example of successful regime performance is successfully implemented agrarian reforms in countries where land is scarce and landlessness is rife. Another example is when the government manages to ward off groups that engage in armed violence, such as armed guerilla insurgencies, right-wing death squads or other terrorist groups that violate human rights and threaten the security of the civilian population, or prevent violent ethnic or religious conflicts. A related example is when the government reduces criminal violence and drug trafficking so that citizens can feel more secure. In many new democracies, organized crime is an escalating problem, and citizen security is often presented as a prioritized political goal. Yet another example of crime is corruption, and if a government successfully implements anti-corruption reforms that reduce corruption, this is probably seen as a positive policy outcome. One could have several objections to Przeworski and his collaborators' structural deterministic study, but even though one does not necessarily share their conviction that economic performance in itself ensures democratic development, some of their arguments are of interest. Accordingly, it is not economic development *per se* that is relevant to this study. Przeworski and his associates' study is an example of how regime performance could promote democratic development by generating legitimacy for the democratic regime. What is interesting from our perspective is not regime performance *per se*, but rather the satisfaction, or the legitimacy, that evolves from regime performance:

> There is a reciprocal relationship between legitimacy and performance. Historically, the more successful a regime is in providing what people want, the greater and more deeply rooted its legitimacy tends to be. A long record of successful performance builds a large reservoir of legitimacy, enabling a democratic system to weather crisis and challenges (Diamond 1999: 77).

Legitimacy

But what is legitimacy, then? In the literature on democratization, legitimacy is generally regarded as a subjective rather than an objective phenomenon, i.e. legitimacy is about the citizens' perceptions of legitimacy rather than some objective criteria. One straightforward definition of legitimacy that has been highly influential within democratization studies has been advanced by Lipset:

> Legitimacy involves the capacity of a political system to engender and maintain the belief that existing political institutions are the most appropriate or proper ones for the society (Lipset 1959: 86).

Legitimacy is a form of support for the regime. As indicated above, regime performance in terms of efficiency and state capacity, particularly over a long period of time, may generate a widespread belief in the legitimacy of the democratic system (see e.g. Turner & Martz 1997; Lipset 1959; Diamond 1999; Morlino & Montero 1995; Diamond & Linz 1989).

Nevertheless, a democratic regime does not have to perform well to be perceived as legitimate. Legitimacy is also related to democracy as an abstract political system. Consequently, despite low performance and failures, the population may still perceive the existing political system as the best to be governed by (Morlino & Montero 1995: 233; Diamond 1999: 66). Using David Easton's terminology, we can distinguish between specific support and diffused support. Specific support is a consequence of a specific satisfaction. It is a specific response to the policies implemented by the government when the demands of the citizens are being fulfilled. Citizens see the connection between their demands and the policies of the authorities, i.e. they are satisfied because they see that their input of demands is being realized (Easton 1965: 268-269). But, as Easton correctly observes, there are systems in which the citizens are dissatisfied for long periods of time because their demands are not met. Easton writes:

> Indeed, no regime or community could gain general acceptance and no set of authorities could expect to hold power if they had to depend exclusively or even largely on outputs to generate support as a return for specific and identifiable benefits (Easton 1965: 269).

Why would citizens support a system in which their demands are not met? The answer, Easton argues, lies in what he calls diffused support. Diffused support is like a reservoir of supportive attitudes that help citizens accept outputs from which they do not benefit. The diffuse support is thus independent of the daily outputs; it is supporting the regime for its own sake:

> [Diffused support] consists of a reserve of support that enables a system to weather the many storms when outputs cannot be balanced off against inputs of demands (Easton 1965: 273).

The perceived legitimacy of a regime may come from performance or from a commitment to democracy as a principle (e.g. Morlino & Montero 1995; Mainwaring 1992: 397). Citizens may be dissatisfied with the government, but still consider the democratic political system to be the only desirable political system to be governed by. Accordingly, even a low-performing democracy may be perceived as being legitimate. But, in the long run, diffuse support or support for the democratic system can erode if the regime does not perform or produce specific support. This is a mutually reinforcing relation; diffuse support creates a tolerance for temporary periods of low performance, and high performance over a long time is likely to produce diffused support (Easton 1965: 275; Lipset 1959). The development of legitimacy for the democratic system is important for new and fragile democracies:

> In brief, the theme of legitimacy remains fundamental to understanding democratic politics. Legitimacy does not need to be universal in the beginning stages if democracy is to succeed, but if a commitment to democracy does not emerge over time, democracy is in trouble (Mainwaring 1992: 307).

As indicated above, legitimacy is here seen as a matter of attitudinal support for the democratic system (Diamond 1999; Linz & Stepan 1996). The operationalization of attitudinal support is methodologically complicated. For one thing, attitudes towards a political regime may easily swing from being perceived as a consequence of a democratic regime and as a

cause of the regime (see Schedler 2001: 75). This problem has been debated in the literature on values and attitudes, as described in Chapter Two (see e.g. Almond & Verba 1989; Inglehart 1988; Muller & Seligson 1994). Another difficulty concerns distinguishing between different types of support. Especially during periods of change, such as a democratic transition, citizens may be unable to distinguish between different types of support, i.e. whether it is a matter of diffuse or specific support (Mishler & Rose 1996: 556-557). One related issue concerns the difficulties in newly established democratic regimes of distinguishing between regime and government. Another methodological question concerns the level of attitudinal support. It goes without saying that complete and total attitudinal support and behavioral compliance with democratic rules and practices only exist in theory. Part of the population will remain passive; others will become vociferous opponents (see e.g. Gunther et al. 1995: 7-8). The question, then, is where to draw the line: How many groups or individuals can reject the democratic rules before the democracy is in trouble?[13] As William Mishler & Richard Rose argue: "it is not possible to specify a priori an absolute level of support necessary for regimes to survive" (1996: 555). Finding the lowest level of attitudinal support is beyond the scope of interest of this study. The position taken here is that temporal comparisons are clearly more fruitful than spatial comparisons. For our purpose it is thus more interesting to examine whether support for democracy is increasing or decreasing and relate this discussion to changes in, for example, regime performance than to compare support for democracy in new democracies with old democracies. However, it could prove to be rewarding to make regional comparisons in countries that have taken a somewhat similar path to democracy.

It is commonly assumed that attitudes to democracy tend to shape behavior (see e.g. Schedler 2001: 69; Morlino & Montero 1995). This is a postulation that could naturally be questioned and further discussed, but as the relation between attitudes and behavior is not the main focus of this study, the assumption is accepted. Leonardo Morlino & José R. Montero, for instance, maintain that positive attitudes towards democracy generally bring about a kind of behavior that is congruent with the democratic system (1995: 232). How is behavior then related to democratic develop-

ment in post-transition societies? In focus here is behavioral compliance with the democratic rules. If the actual behavior of the political elite and the broader mass public fits the formal rules of the democratic system, this is a sign of democratic development (O'Donnell 1996a: 41). Schedler classifies the kinds of behavior that do not fit the formal rules of the democratic system into three categories: the use of violence, the rejection of elections, and the transgression of authority (2001: 70-71). The use of violence refers to those actors who "play another game than their democratic counterparts, one that dangerously subverts the universal validity of democratic rules". Examples of use of violence are political assassinations and intimidation of voters and political candidates. The rejection of elections concerns refusals to participate or to let others participate, attempts to control the electoral outcome, or non-acceptance of the outcome. The transgression of authority, finally, refers to the tendency of political actors to put themselves above the law (Schedler 2001: 70-71).

The military is often singled out as an anti-democratic actor that poses a threat to a new democracy, mainly because of its unwillingness to accept subordination to elected civilian leaders. However, anti-democratic behavior could also be found among those civilian politicians who refuse to accept horizontal accountability and constitutional limits, i.e. politicians that place themselves above the law. Huntington argues that the main threat to "third wave democracies" is not posed by generals or revolutionaries, as in the past, but more likely by the participants in the democratic process (1997: 8). A good case in point is the *autogolpes* by President Fujimori in Peru and President Serrano in Guatemala (Diamond 1997: xxi). Autogolpe is a Latin American term, which literally means self-coup, and refers to a coup that is launched by the president himself in order to extend his power (Brooker 2000: 78-79). Huntington refers to this behavior, i.e. the executive concentrating power in his hands and suspending the legislatures and dissolving the constitution, as "executive arrogation" and argues that this is a serious threat to democracy (1997: 9). Other examples of anti-democratic actors that pose a threat to a democratic regime by their unwillingness to comply with the rules of democracy are

local oligarchical bosses who engage in patrimonial styles of ruling (see e.g. Diamond 1997: xxi).[14]

Attitudes and behavior could be analyzed at the following different levels: the mass public level, the elite level, and the intermediate level (collective actors). As shown in Chapter Two, most scholars conclude that the transition is essentially controlled by elites. The elite level, i.e. top decision makers, organizational and political leaders, and other molders of opinion, are most influential because of the disproportionate power they exercise (e.g. Diamond 1999: 66; O'Donnell 1992: 23):

> Beyond their direct power over events and decisions, however, elites also play a crucial role in shaping political culture and in signaling what kinds of behavior are proper and improper (Diamond 1999: 66).

A transition to democracy can be accomplished without support from the mass public, for example through pact making, or imposition in Karl's terms (1990). However, in studies concerned with democratic development in post-transition societies, the mass public is often ascribed a more central role (see e.g. Doh Chull Shin 1994: 144-154). It is especially anti-democratic values among the masses that are considered to pose a serious threat to democracy (Plasser et al. 1998: 34-36, 44-47). Even though most citizens are not politically active or in control of significant political resources, they cannot be neglected, because if a significant number of the citizens rejected the democratic system, democracy would arguably be threatened (Gunther et al. 1995: 13-18). The position adopted in this study is that if the democratic system is perceived as legitimate among the elite, and if only the elite's behavior is congruent with the formal rules of democracy, the new democracy is very fragile. Consequently the democratic regime must be supported by the broader mass public as well. Total attitudinal support and behavioral compliance are of course a utopia, but if a substantial share of the politically relevant groups and actors demonstrate disloyalty to the democratic system, the future of the democracy is uncertain.

To summarize this section, political institutionalization, regime performance and development of legitimacy for the democratic system are important aspects of the democratic development of new democracies. These pro-

cesses are related to each other in the sense that they can reinforce each other. For example, both political institutionalization and regime performance are likely to generate an increased legitimacy for the democratic regime. This legitimacy could, however, evolve without regime performance.

Summary

The process of democratization does not end with the inauguration of a democratically elected government. By contrast, given that many of the third wave transitions have resulted in weak and fragile democracies, extensive research on post-transition societies is needed. We need to understand how new democracies can become more democratic and more legitimate and how the risk of democratic breakdown can be reduced. This study is primarily concerned with three aspects of democratic development in post-transition societies. First, we have argued for the importance of institutionalizing political society. In order for the democratic system to function effectively, it is important to strengthen the rule of law and horizontal accountability. An independent judicial system is indispensable for rule of law. In addition, it is important to strengthen the bureaucracy and reduce such authoritarian remnants as patrimonialism and clientelism that flourish in the state bureaucracies in many newly established democracies. Institutions of governance, e.g. legislatures and political parties, must also be strengthened. Secondly, it is essential that the regime is effective, i.e. that the democratic regime performs well. Regime performance can, for example, be economic development, successfully implemented anti-corruption campaigns or agrarian reforms. Thirdly, the population must perceive the new democratic regime as legitimate. In this chapter we have distinguished between the specific support that is a result of regime performance and the diffuse support that is a broader support for the democratic system as a principle. These are a few of the challenges with which newly established democracies are confronted. The purpose of this study is to analyze how civil society can contribute to democratic development in these post-transitional settings. Let us therefore turn to civil society and its functions in a democratization process.

Notes

1 A similar discussion can be found in Schedler (2001), who makes a somewhat different categorization. He discusses behavioral foundations, i.e. compliance with the democratic rules, attitudinal foundations such as legitimacy, and structural conditions such as socioeconomic development and institutional design.

2 The sudden death of a democracy is likely to be caused by a military coup (see O'Donnell 1992: 19).

3 "Informally" refers to when, for instance, the armed forces argue that they defend the general interests of the state, or the national security doctrine.

4 In addition to the tutelary powers and reserved domains, Valenzuela (1992) also lists major discriminations in the electoral process and other methods to constitute governments than elections, as examples of perverse institutionalisation.

5 For a more elaborated discussion of the military factor and democratic consolidation, the interested reader should turn to Valenzuela (1992) and Agüero (1992).

6 Diamond bases his discussion on Samuel P. Huntington's *Political Order in Changing Societies* (1968).

7 The Inter-American Development Bank, as well as several bilateral donors such as the USAID regard judicial reform as crucial for both democratization and economic liberalization and have allocated considerable resources to "legal technical assistance" with the purpose of reforming the often weak and discredited judicial systems (see e.g. Ciurlizza 2000; Sieder & Costello 1996: 172).

8 The definition of corruption provided by Rose-Ackerman is a generally accepted one. For example, the World Bank uses a similar definition. See e.g. Blomkvist (2001) and Rose-Ackerman (1999) for a discussion of corruption in public administration

9 Diamond makes a distinction between economic and political performance. Economic performance refers to economic growth, low inflation, and equal distribution. Political performance, in Diamond's view, refers to the ability to deliver open, clean and decent governance, to ensure democratic responsiveness, deliberation, and accountability (1999: 87). In more concrete terms, it concerns transparency, rule of law, liberty and constitutionalism and is in this study regarded as part of political institutionalization.

10 Przeworski et al. (1996) added other factors, such as the international climate, political learning, and the effect of institutions. They conclude that affluence, growth with moderate inflation, declining inequality, a favorable international climate, and parliamentarism increase the chances of democratic survival.

11 High inflation has been identified by others as a factor in triggering democratic breakdowns (before the mid-1970s), but Gasiorowski & Power's study shows that, at an early stage of the process, high inflation has a positive effect on democratic endurance. The explanation for why high inflation no longer hindered democratic development could be found in Remmer's argument that general changes such as the changed US foreign policy towards Latin America "helped insulate democracies from the adverse effects of the economic crisis that plagued Latin America in the 1980s, as potential coup leaders felt strong pressures not to overthrow

democratic regimes and realized that they would receive little support if they did so" (Remmer quoted in Gasiorowski & Power 1998). In essence, the changed circumstances made fragile democracies more immune against the threat posed by economic crises .

12 It is hard to assess the impact of income equality due to lack of data; see Przeworski et al. (1996: 43).

13 Diamond argues that the threshold for attitudinal support at the mass level should be around 70-75 percent and that he has empirical as well as logical evidence of this statement (1999: 68). However, the threshold levels presented by Diamond are not very compelling.

14 For elaborated discussions of the behavioral dimension of consolidation, see Diamond (1999: 65-72) Linz & Stepan (1996: 5-6) and Gunther et al. (1995: 7).

Chapter Four

The Virtues and Vices of Civil Society

Civil society appeared as a catchword in the literature on democratization in the late 1980s. The concept has been fiercely criticized on the grounds that it is a flattened notion and only provides tautological reasoning. This study acknowledges the conceptual problems involved, and agrees with the statement that the concept of civil society has become too broad and all-embracing. However, as argued in the introductory chapter, if applied systematically and without any conceptual stretching, civil society could serve as an important analytical tool for understanding political change in general, and democratic development in particular (Pearce 1997: 80).

This chapter argues that if we want to understand civil society's democracy-building functions, civil society must be analytically separated from other concepts, particularly the idea of "civic community". Civil society is not inherently virtuous or supportive of democracy. Civil society can also be "uncivil society". However, with a more differentiated concept, civil society can be a useful analytical tool in studies of democratic development. In order to explore the difficulties involved in the study of civil society, the chapter begins with an attempt to trace the genealogy of the concept.

Civil Society—the Genealogy of a Concept

Civil society has a long history in Western political theory. It has been subject to a wide range of interpretations, among them Aristotelian, Roman, Lockean and Hegelian (e.g. Van Rooy 1998a: 7). In order to be able to understand the concept of civil society and its theoretical implications, it is necessary to understand its historical roots. It is important to stress that the following historical overview of the concept has no ambitions of being a complete account of how civil society has been conceptualized in political theory. As this is a study of civil society's

democracy-building functions, we focus solely on the aspects that are relevant to our continued discussion.

From Politike Koinonia to Civilis Societas

The modern concept of civil society has its origins in Aristotle's *politike koinonia*, perhaps best translated as political community or political society. In the *politike koinonia,* a set of norms and values that constituted the base for interaction in the Greek city-state were represented:

> *Politike koinonia* was defined as a public ethical-political community of free and equal citizens under a legally defined system of rule. Law itself, however, was seen as the expression of an *ethos*, a common set of norms and values defining not only political procedures but also a substantive form of life based on a developed catalogue of preferred virtues and forms of interaction (Cohen & Arato 1992: 84).

The most interesting thing about Aristotle's *politike koinonia* for this particular study is that it made no distinction between state and society. It is rather an all-encompassing social system (Cohen & Arato 1992: 84). What is also interesting for our purpose of examining civil society in the democratization process is that *politike koinonia* implied a common ethos or a set of values and norms (Cohen & Arato 1992: 85).

Within the Roman tradition, civil society appeared as *civilis societas* in the writings of Cicero. The Roman tradition saw the state as an instrument of civil society, rather than its antithesis (Van Rooy 1998a: 7). *Civilis societas* was different from the private sphere—a community of men engaged in their public roles. *Civilis societas* was concerned with the moral values in such a community (Van Rooy 1998a: 8). As in the Aristotelian tradition, there was no important division between the state and (civil) society. According to Jean L. Cohen & Andrew Arato, the Roman conception of *civilis societas* played only a minor role in political philosophy (1992: 85).

Perhaps more influential in the development of the modern idea of civil society than the Roman tradition was the natural law tradition, which refers to a set of objective principles of justice derived from nature (Seligman 1992: 18). The chief dividing line within this tradition is whether the law

is founded on reason or on revelation, that is, subject to divine will or based on man's own reason (Seligman 1992: 17-21).

> The tradition of natural law provided as it were the bases for the development of that strand of social thought we identify with the idea of civil society […] The traditions of moral philosophy that we associate with the Scottish Enlightenment and out of which the modern idea of civil society emerged were steeped in natural law speculation and in the writings of Cicero, Grotius, Puffendorf, and Barberyrac (Seligman 1992: 21).

Let us turn to one of the philosophers whose work was based upon a belief in natural law. To John Locke, individuals were free and equal but subject to a natural law that was divine. To Locke there is no worldly authority, but all authority is derived from God. The natural law is a guarantee of every individual's right to life, freedom and property. To protect the freedom and rights of individuals, a social contract between rulers and ruled was established. Individuals thus gave up part of their liberty to a government, for the public good. The government rested upon people's consent. Civil society was a compromise or a social contract, i.e. a human construction to improve the natural condition (Seligman 1992: 22; Goldwin 1992: 47). Accordingly, Locke does not make a distinction between civil society and the state. In sum, then, political philosophers from Aristotle to Locke do not perceive state and civil society as two distinct spheres, but rather as an integrated unity.

Scottish Enlightenment Philosophy

The strongest influence on the modern idea of civil society was, however, exerted by the Scottish Enlightenment philosophers, e.g. Adam Ferguson, Thomas Paine, Adam Smith. With the Scottish Enlightenment came a return to an Aristotelian perception of civil society with a focus on moral values and virtues and with an emphasis on the "civil" in civil society. But in contrast to *politike koinonia*, Scottish moral philosophy included the economic system in the concept of civil society, and this is perhaps most explicitly expressed in Adam Smith's work (see Cohen & Arato 1992: 90).

The Scottish Enlightenment also clearly distinguished civil society from the state and introduced the idea that individuals must be protected from the powerful state (see Van Rooy 1998a: 8). Civil society was thus perceived as a civilizing antidote to the state. To the Scottish Enlightenment philosophers the idea of civil society was an "ethically obtainable ideal" (Seligman 1992: 26).

The emerging market economy, which had developed in the 18th century, made people more aware of private interests in the public realm. With the development of a modern society appeared new relations and conflicts, such as between the private and the public, between the individual and society and between egoism and altruism (Seligman 1992: 25). The new interaction required some sort of ethics or moral order, and this concern became a central element in the Scottish philosophy (Seligman 1992: 26). The natural law tradition played a significant role for the Scottish Enlightenment—the moral sentiments and ethics were formed by the interaction in civil society, i.e. by reason rather than by revelation (Seligman 1992: 35).

One cornerstone of the Scottish Enlightenment was the notion of the potential danger of a powerful state. The Scottish Professor of Philosophy Adam Ferguson—perhaps most famous for his *Essay on the History of Civil Society* published in 1767—argued for the importance of guarding oneself against authoritarianism by developing independent societies within the civil society sphere (Van Rooy 1998a: 8).[1] Ferguson's moral philosophy was influenced by the stoics and Montesquieu (Lehmann 1968). Man is seen as an active social being, and much of Ferguson's work is concerned with human action in the community and how virtues (prudence, justice, temperance and fortitude, i.e. the cardinal virtues) are formed by man's action in society. Reason was the chief source of moral knowledge. In Ferguson's view, civil society was the arena where these virtues were cultivated (Lehmann 1968; Zetterberg 1995: 70-71; Segerstedt 1937: 133-147).

Another famous writer and political pamphleteer, Thomas Paine, went even further and argued that the state itself might impede the aspirations for social equality and liberty that existed within civil society (Van Rooy 1998a: 8). Paine saw the expanding state as a threat to individuals' exercise of their rights, which formed the basis of a vital civil society (Hyden 1997). Paine criticized the

monarchy and strongly argued for a republican form of government. Paine was also famous for his radical egalitarianism. In *Agrarian Justice* (1797), for example, he proposed poverty relief, public education, old-age pensions and unemployment projects, all financed by taxes (see Young 1968). Thus, Paine's writings combined anti-statist tendencies with egalitarianism.

Adam Smith, who is perhaps most often associated with economics, perceived civil society as a way of demonstrating the possibility of self-organization. The activities of ordinary people could regulate themselves without the intervention of government. In *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1854) Smith argued that civil society was the arena where exchange and social interaction took place, and it was also the very heart of the values and norms of mutuality and recognition of other individuals, i.e. an ethical arena (see Seligman 1992: 27). This is a return to the Aristotelian conception. It is, however, important to note that the theological notion that had been important in for example Locke's writings had been replaced with a view of morality as constituted within the human world. Civil society was thus a moral sphere, not simply an arena of exchange. Morals were created by men, through the process of exchange (Seligman 1992: 27-31):

> What the idea of civil society meant to the thinkers of the Scottish Enlightenment was thus primarily a realm of solidarity held together by the force of moral sentiments and natural affections (Seligman 1992: 33).

As we now conclude the discussion of the Scottish Enlightenment, we should remember the Scottish moral philosophers' return to the Aristotelian notion of civil society with its emphasis on values and moral virtues. But in contrast to the Aristotelian conception, political society was regarded as separate from civil society. On the other hand, the new market economy was seen as a part of civil society.

Tocqueville and Democracy in America

The philosopher who probably had the greatest impact on the modern idea of civil society was Alexis de Tocqueville and his *Democracy in America*, published between 1835 (Volume I) and 1840 (Volume II). Tocqueville actually had an ambivalent attitude towards democracy, which

was mainly based on a fear of the masses—*la foule*—and of the unmediated popular will that could cause a revolution. In the democratic state, Tocqueville saw the potential peril of the expanding state and the tyranny of the majority. In the growing market economy he saw the perils of unlimited selfishness and egoism, which for Tocqueville implied the end of all public morals. Individuals who are controlled by their egoistic desires easily become part of *la foule* (see Ehnmark 1990: 162-163).

But at the same time Tocqueville was fascinated by the way democracy worked in America. According to him, the reasons why democracy worked so well were coincidences such as the geography[2] and the institutional design of federalism and local governance, which Tocqueville refers to as the "laws."[3] Finally, and most importantly there were the so-called *moeurs* (Tocqueville 1997: 425). *Moeurs* refers to the citizens' morals and intellectual condition (Tocqueville 1997: 400). Unselfishness and political participation were considered virtuous behavior, whereas selfishness and political apathy were the antithesis of *moeurs*. Unlimited self-interest was seen as a threat to the morals and ethics of society and paved the way for despotism. *Moeurs* were thus seen as a requisite for freedom in a democracy. The relation, however, is mutually constitutive in the sense that democracy itself is a school where *moeurs* are practiced and learned. Associational life is thus crucial to the survival of freedom in the democratic system, because it is within associations that the mass public learns and practices *moeurs* (Ehnmark 1990: 168-171).

What is particularly interesting from our perspective is Tocqueville's argument that *moeurs* are constructed in democratic life. Thus, democracy is inherently problematic (because of the risk of the tyranny of the majority), but the solution is to be found in democracy itself. The essence of Tocqueville's project is then to use democratic procedures as a way to mediate the inherent dangers of democracy. Practicing democracy implies the creation of *moeurs*, which eventually mitigate democracy (Ehnmark 1990: 174). Public training within the democratic system reduces the perils posed by egoistic individuals, by *la foule's* revolutionary tendencies and by the tyranny of the majority.

Tocqueville was indeed enthralled by America's community spirit, its volunteerism and its many associations. Thus associational life provided

civic education, served as a channel of promoting and defending the interests of the citizens, and controlled state power (Hyden 1997). But *moeurs*, or civic education, was generated not only through associational life, but also through local governance. Tocqueville was fascinated by the community spirit in New England (1997: 99-117). He describes local governance as a defense against the majority in the central powers.[4] Local communities allow citizens to take active part in governance and to develop an understanding of the balance of powers and of citizens' rights and duties (Ehnmark 1990: 168-172; Tocqueville 1997: 99-117). Voluntary associations and independent local communities not only generated *moeurs*, but they also constituted a pluralism that could restrain the central power and the tyranny of the majority.

What is particularly interesting from our democratization perspective is that the Scottish Enlightenment and Tocqueville separated civil society from the state, arguing that it could actually serve as a defense against the potential dangers of a powerful state. Civil society as an arena where a moral order was created existed already in Aristotle's *politike koinonia* but was perhaps more elaborated in the works of Tocqueville. In addition, the Scottish Enlightenment stressed the pluralism within civil society. The idea of associational life as the solution to the inherent dangers of a democratic system has had a great impact on modern democratic theory.

The Resurrection of Civil Society

From the mid-18th century to the mid-19th century two antithetical lines regarding civil society were established. One of these has its origins in the Scottish Enlightenment and Tocqueville. The other has its origins in Hegel (see Seligman 1992: 10-11). Peter Lewis (1992) refers to the two distinctly different lines of thought as "the state-centric view of civil society" (the Hegelian view) and "the society-centered view of civil society" (Tocqueville). The Hegelian[5] and post-Hegelian[6] tradition has been important for the Marxist critique of liberal democracy. In the post-Marxist tradition, the idea of civil society was closely associated with the "new social movements approach". This approach perceives the new social movements (e.g. pacifism, environmentalism, feminism) as a political

challenge to the existing power structures, aiming at radically redefining the political realm (see e.g. Escobar & Alvarez (eds.) 1992; Sztompka 1993; Thörn 1999; Eckstein (ed.) 2001).[7] The new social movements approach has a vision of a radical democracy, and it questions and seeks to redefine and extend the traditional forms of democracy (see Mouffe 1992; Thörn 1999). However, as it is the society-centered approach based upon the ideas of the Scottish Enlightenment and Tocqueville that has been most important to democratization studies, Hegel, or the post-Hegelian tradition, will not be discussed here.

At the beginning of the 20th century, the concept of civil society almost disappeared from political literature, and it was not until the late 1970s that the concept reemerged. In modern times the resurrection of civil society is often associated with the revolutions in East and Central Europe in the late 1980s, and particularly with the emergence of the Solidarity Movement in Poland, but also with the daily resistance against the military regimes in Latin America (see e.g. Trädgårdh 1999: 15-16). Alison Van Rooy dates the resurgence of the concept of civil society to the "floating university of Poland's pre-Solidarity days, the Czechoslovakian 'velvet' underground, and Hungary's circles of freedom" (1998a: 10). In the same vein, Cohen & Arato stress the importance of the Polish opposition for civil society's reemergence (1992: 31).[8] Many dissidents saw civil society as tightly linked to a market economy, and consequently returned to the Scottish Enlightenment ideas of civil society as related to the market economy (Sullivan 1999: 36).

The resurgence of civil society in the Latin American context was intimately related to grassroots movements and the ecclesiastical base communities (CEBs) that offered strategies for survival and daily resistance to the poor and marginalized sectors against the military regimes (Sinclair 1995: 2-12). CEBs emerged in the 1960s, inspired by liberation theology and the changes in the doctrine of the Catholic Church after the Second Vatican Council, which resulted in an increased emphasis on justice and equality (Lehmann 1990: 88-147; Eckstein 2001: 30-31).[9] CEBs worked in the communities, often with the aim of creating an increased awareness. Consciousness-raising, or *conscientização*, in the words of Paolo Freire, referred to "the development of the awakening of critical awareness" (1973: 19).[10] Thus, both the East European and the

Latin American conception of civil society emerged as a reaction to totalitarian and authoritarian regimes, and as a way to democratize the political system from below (Trädgårdh 1999: 15-16).[11]

Why, then, did the idea of civil society reemerge and become so influential in political science in the late 20th century? Students concerned with democratization saw civil society as an explanation of why some countries managed to develop democracy beyond its formal structure, whereas others remained weak and fragile democracies. Those concerned with the more normative democratic theory, especially the advocates of participatory models of democracy, regarded civil society as a response to inadequate democracy (see e.g. Cohen & Arato 1992: 159; Thörn 1999).

To conclude, the idea of civil society certainly has long traditions in the history of Western political thought, and the different conceptions of it have contributed to the conceptual confusion. The modern idea of civil society as it has been treated in democratization studies has its origins in the Scottish Enlightenment with its conception of civil society as a defense against a power-abusing state, and in Tocqueville's view of civil society as the source of civic education. In sum, it is the idea of civil society as an arena where pluralism and civic education are formed that has had a great impact on democratization studies.

The Abstract Maze of Civil Society

As mentioned before, the concept of civil society has been accused of being an elusive concept, one reason being "theoretical myopia", which refers to the fact that different perspectives, such as for example liberalism and Marxism, have their own conceptions of civil society:

> Given these very different resonances, it is no wonder that contemporary uses of the term tend to be broad and often lack analytical rigor. The works of writers as diverse as Ferguson and Marx, Hegel and Adam Smith, Tocqueville and Gramsci are all invoked in the contemporary 'rediscovery' of civil society (Seligman 1992: 3).

Libertarians and communitarians, for example, have different conceptions of civil society (see e.g. Barber 1999: 12-19).[12] It is therefore necessary

to be mindful of the implications of our choices. However, it is imperative to note that this study has no ambitions to cover all perspectives. As this is a study of democratization, and more specifically of what democracy-building functions civil society could have in a post-transitional setting, the presentation of the concept of civil society will be structured from a democratization perspective.

What is Civil Society?

> A maze is a place where people end up going round in circles or reach dead ends. Unless care is taken, analysing civil society feels like this because it is an abstract political concept whose explanation is part and parcel of the theory being applied, hence any definition becomes tautological (Fowler 1996a: 13).

In the modern literature on civil society, a substantial number of definitions can be found. The aim here is to define civil society as broadly as possible, i.e. to use few defining attributes. The discussion of the genealogy of the concept demonstrates its Western origins, but within democratization studies today, the concept is being applied to culturally different contexts.[13] Hence we need a concept that is able to travel without being stretched, and this calls for a definition with few defining attributes. Civil society is therefore defined as: all the voluntarily formed non-profit collectivities that seek to promote or to protect an interest and that are part neither of the state nor of the family sphere.

Thus, civil society includes many different kinds of organized activities. For the sake of simplicity, all these kinds of organized collective action (development NGOs, cooperatives, networks, human rights groups etc.) will be referred to as "civil society organizations" (CSOs). Yet, a few additional remarks are necessary. The first reservation is that organizations or associations concerned with strictly inward-looking or private ends are not considered parts of civil society. Organizations must act in the public sphere, or be concerned with public rather than private ends. Networks or associations at the household level or of a family nature are therefore not included. Pursuing the same line of thought, Larry Diamond excludes inward-looking group

activities such as recreation, entertainment or religious spirituality (1994b: 5). Consequently, football teams, bird-watching societies etc., are excluded from our conception of civil society due to their private character.

The notion of non-profit indicates that profit-making enterprises are not part of civil society. Business firms and other profit-making enterprises are better conceptualized as part of economic society and not as part of civil society, as their purpose is to make a profit for their owners or shareholders rather than to promote or defend an interest shared by a group of individuals (see White 1994: 389; Hyden 2002: 16; Jørgensen 1996: 37). However, the distinction is sometimes blurred; an organization may run a business parallel to financing the other type of activities (Jørgensen 1996: 37). For example, a human rights organization can publish literature or other material for commercial purposes to finance other activities such as courses in human rights for citizens. But, as profit making is not the chief objective, such an organization is part of civil society.

A third reservation concerns civil society's relation to political society. This study maintains that only organizations that are concerned with public ends are part of civil society. However, organizations that seek to assume formal power are not part of civil society (see e.g. Diamond 1999: 223). This is a central distinction, which is also the chief argument for excluding political parties from civil society. Political parties seek formal power through participation in elections. One of the tasks of political parties is to form a government, and therefore political parties are part of political society, and not of civil society. Civil society has an important function by representing interests and placing issues on the political agenda. Thus, civil society influences political power, but does not aspire to be part of the formal political power. There is therefore a constant interaction between civil society and political society, and this raises the question of civil society autonomy. An active civil society that seeks to influence policy is unlikely to be totally autonomous from the state. Civil society organizations sometimes receive funding from the government and sometimes assist state agencies in the implementation of policies. For example, development NGOs often cooperate with state departments such as the health department to implement water and sanitation projects or other types of development-related projects:

> In order to influence public policy […] civil society organizations need to relate to the state. Total independence is virtually incompatible with political influence (Hadenius & Uggla 1996: 1628).

But only organizations that are not directed by the state are part of civil society. The issue of autonomy is important and complex, and we will therefore return to this issue in Chapter Five.

To sum up, civil society is here regarded as those collectivities, e.g. organizations, associations, and networks that are located between the state and the family sphere, and formed voluntarily by individuals to promote or defend their interests. Organizations that are concerned with recreational rather than public ends, organizations that seek formal political power and organizations that are founded to make a profit are not included in what we refer to as civil society. Civil society could accordingly be regarded as a societal sphere that is located between political society and economic society (see e.g. Lundquist 2001: 46-50; Van Rooy 1998a: 20). In practice, these spheres overlap. Consider, for example, a human rights organization that generates an income, or a social movement that develops into a political party. Civil society is not a homogenous entity, but contains a pluralism of interests that are sometimes in conflict with each other. John A. Hall describes it as follows:

> Civil society is thus a complex balance of consensus and conflict, the valuation of as much difference as is compatible with the bare minimum of consensus necessary for settled existence (Hall 1995: 6).

When we speak of "civil society" we must keep in mind that a multitude of interests are involved. Thus, any statement concerning civil society inevitably involves a reduction. Therefore it is sometimes preferable to speak of civil society organizations (CSOs) rather than civil society, particularly when there are conflicting interests. Still, a number of conceptual problems remain to be solved. Let us therefore turn to the issue of civic community and (un)civil society.

Civil Society and Civic Community

Civil society and civic community sometimes appear to be overlapping concepts. This is an unfortunate development. The different meanings of civil society and civic community, and the relation between them, have undoubtedly caused much confusion. The reason is that, at times, civil society has been treated as being intrinsically virtuous and democratic, as it has been mixed up with the idea of a civic community and with the creation of social capital. This is why it has been argued that civil society as a factor in the democratization process provides only tautological reasoning (see e.g. Diamond 1999: 227; Kasfir 1998a: 11). The debate springs from an inability or unwillingness to separate the concepts of civil society and civic community.

Civic Community and Social Capital

The concept of civic community was launched by Robert Putnam in his renowned work *Making Democracy Work* (1993). In this study, the northern regions of Italy were compared with the regions in the south. The study reveals greater success in terms of institutional performance for the northern regions. This pattern is explained by the strong civic associations—the civic community. Putnam argues that the chief explanation of why democratic institutions are more efficient and seen as more legitimate in the northern regions of Italy is the higher degree of civic traditions in northern Italy. Associations promote civic engagement through the production of what Putnam called social capital (Putnam 1993; see also 1995; 2000). Social capital, defined as "[…] features of social organization, such as trust, norms, and networks, that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated actions" (Putman 1993: 167), is a key concept in Putnam's study.[14] Putman's book had an enormous impact, not only in academia but also among policy-makers. However, Putnam's study has also been criticized on the grounds that he chooses his historical periods arbitrarily, and that he makes no distinction between different types of organizations (see e.g. Berman 1997; Cohen 1999).

In the wake of Putman's influential study, a body of literature focusing on civic community and the virtues of civic associations developed.

Advocates of this tradition have been referred to as Neo-Tocquevillians, because of the emphasis they place on the virtues of associationalism (Putnam 1995; Whitehead 1997). Laurence Whitehead's notion of civil society, for example, includes only associations that are civil or behave "civilly" (1997: 100-101). Whitehead bases his discussion on Philippe C. Schmitter's definition of civil society, which requires (among other things) that the associations and groups "agree to act within preestablished rules of a 'civil' nature." Thus, according to Schmitter, one condition or one behavioral norm of civil society is civility (1997b: 240).[15] Against this background, Omar Encarnación discusses the difference between civil society and civic community and concludes:

> For Tocqueville and Putnam, the strength of civil society resides primarily within the density of associational life, be it political or otherwise. Its connection to democracy rests principally on the manner in which associationalism promotes civic engagement and enhances social capital. For democratization theorists, the relevance of civil society to democracy rests on the capacity of advocacy groups to mount a vigorous opposition to dictatorship and to serve as a counterweight to the state and keep in check abuses of power once the new democratic regime is in place (Encarnación 2001: 59).

Consequently, the focus for the Neo-Tocquevillians is somewhat different than for democratization theorists—whereas Putnam is interested in recreational organizations such as bowling leagues, bird-watching societies and so on, the focus for those concerned with democratization has rather been on organizations with more public ends or even with a political character, such as human rights organizations or women's movements (Encarnación 2001: 59). Diamond articulates the difference between civic community and civil society as follows:

> […] civic community is both a broader and narrower concept than civil society: broader in that it encompasses all manner of associations (parochial included); narrower in that it includes only associations structured horizontally around ties that are more or less mutual, co-operative, symmetrical, and trusting (Diamond 1999: 226).

Civic community, in Putnam's tradition, contains all types of organizations, even those that are parochial. For Putnam, the associations generate the important social capital. In the contemporary debate, the idea of civil society has often been fused with the idea of civic community. It seems reasonable to argue that this is the chief explanation of why civil society has been regarded as something inherently civic and democratic and, hence, has been perceived as a tautological concept. If the concept of civil society is to be theoretically useful in democratization studies, it is imperative to accept that a civil society is not inherently democratic or civic (Diamond 1999: 227).

> Little will be gained in explanatory power by ruling uncivil organizations out of civil society solely on the ground that they are uncivil—and even less by supposing they must be anti-democratic just because they are judged to be uncivil (Kasfir 1998a: 12).

The tautological character of the concept poses a problem, and the concept of civil society must therefore be separated from the notion of civicness. Civil society organizations could be undemocratic, uncivil, and particularistic in their internal structure (Diamond 1999: 227; Van Rooy 1998a: 12-15; Kasfir 1998a: 11-12; Brysk 2000: 150-164).

The discussion of civil society and civic community brings us over to the question of what kind of concept civil society is. The debate originates in the wide field of applications of the concept. The concept of civil society is used as an analytical category to describe a social phenomenon, as a normative ethical ideal that includes a vision of civil society as an intrinsically good thing, and finally, as a political slogan (Seligman 1992: 201). Mixing up these different uses of the concept of civil society can cause a problem. Moreover, following the argument outlined above, if the concept is used as an analytical category but is based on a normative ethical ideal, we easily end up in tautological reasoning—when civil society is regarded as inherently democratic and virtuous. Thus, if the concept is to be of theoretical use in studies concerned with democratization, civil society must be treated as an analytical category (e.g. Diamond 1999: 227; see also Pearce 1997: 72).[16]

(Un)Civil Society

Associations are not necessarily conducive to democratic virtues, and not every part of civil society is "civic minded" (Sullivan 1999: 32). Civil society can also be "uncivil society" or "bad civil society" in Simone Chambers & Jeffery Kopstein's terms (2001). Bad civil society cannot perform the same democracy-strengthening function as civil society (Chambers & Kopstein 2001; see also Stubbergaard 1998: 7-8). Some organizations are vociferous and of an uncivil nature, with anti-democratic and uncompromising goals and methods (Chambers & Kopstein 2001). What complicates the picture, however, is that organizations with anti-democratic goals and methods may still produce such "virtues" as solidarity and trust among their members. Against this background, Chambers & Kopstein argue that we must recognize the difference between particularistic and democratic civility:

> Particularistic civility contains all the goods that are associated with participation (trust, public-spiritedness, self-sacrifice), but only between members of a particular group, and it often encourages the opposite sort of attitude to members outside of the group. Democratic civility, in contrast, extends the goods learned in participation to all citizens regardless of group membership (Chambers & Kopstein 2001: 841).

Putnam has been criticized because in *Making Democracy Work* (1993) he does not discuss how the aims and values of the organization and the internal structure, which could be hierarchical or authoritarian, affect the possibility to generate social capital (e.g. Foley & Edwards 1997; 1998a; 1998b; Cohen 1999). In a footnote he touches upon this complex of problems, but critics including Jean L. Cohen, have reacted against Putnam's strange decision to deal with this important question in a footnote (Cohen 1999: 62-63). In *Bowling Alone*, however, Putnam engages in the discussion and presents a distinction between bridging or inclusive social capital on the one hand and bonding or exclusive social capital on the other (2000: 22). In the same vein, Dietlind Stolle & Thomas R. Rochon (1998) make a distinction between public civicness, which is a form of generalized interpersonalized trust, and personalized civicness. In spite of not being civic some associations like, for

example, the Mafia still produce strong member-oriented bonds and high levels of personalized civicness, i.e. what Putnam would have defined as bonding or exclusive capital. The Mafia, religious fundamentalists, militia groups and terrorists all belong to the category of groups that does not produce a public civicness but only personalized civicness (Stolle & Rochon 1998).[17]

Consequently, the idea that civil society is always supportive of democracy, as assumed by Neo-Tocquevillians, must be questioned. In order to understand civil society and its relation to democracy, we must analyze the substantive values that are promoted within the organizations (Chambers & Kopstein 2001: 842). Civil society organizations are not always democratic in their goals and methods and certainly do not always produce public civicness or bridging or inclusive social capital (see e.g. Chandhoke 2001: 15). Consider, for example, a civil society populated chiefly by organizations that produce personalized civicness or bonding social capital. Rather than strengthening democratic life, they could pose a threat to democracy (see e.g. Whittington 1998):

> […] the idea that associational life is always the source of democratic activism, that can be counterposed to the arbitrary state, is one that is riddled with ambiguity (Chandhoke 2001: 13).

To conclude the discussion of (un)civil society and civic community, the argument put forward here is that civil society should not be confused with civic community. Whereas civic community may well embrace parochial organizations, civil society contains only organizations with public ends. Moreover, whereas organizations or associations in civic community are characterized by a civic spirit and generate social capital, civil society organizations are not necessarily good, virtuous, or democratic. In civil society, all kinds of associations are included, whether they be "good" or "bad", and civil society is conceptually separated from the notion of civicness. The concept of civic community, championed by Neo-Tocquevillians, is problematic as it involves tautological reasoning. Whether civil society is good or bad is, basically, an empirical question. In sum, then, the choice of perspective has implications for how we study civil society in a democratization process.

Civil Society's Democracy-Building Potential

The discussion of whether civil society is inherently virtuous and supportive of democracy or whether it can actually be bad brings to the fore a discussion of how civil society is related to democracy. Michael W. Foley & Bob Edwards make a distinction between what they refer to as "two versions of civil society". The first version is the kind of civil society that "fosters patterns of civility in the actions of citizens in a democratic polity" (Civil Society I). The second version of civil society is that which is independent of the state and a source of resistance to the existing regime (Civil Society II). The first perspective emphasizes the more direct democracy-building character of civil society by generating civic education, and the latter focuses on civil society's indirect democracy-building function as a countervailing power that limits state power (Foley & Edwards 1996: 39). Civil society, compounded of a multitude of interests that are represented in society, controls and limits the state, ensuring that it will not abuse its power. Moreover, the pluralism in civil society is a guarantee that the state will not be controlled or swallowed by one interest. An analogous categorization is provided by Axel Hadenius and Fredrik Uggla, who refer to two functions of civil society—the pluralistic and the educational ones (1996: 1622). In order to perform the pluralist or countervailing function, civil society organizations must be autonomous from the state and concerned with public ends. For the educational functions, the organizations' internal structures, especially concerning openness and accountability are in focus (Hadenius & Uggla 1996: 1624).

Hence, we can conclude that civil society simultaneously supports the state and functions as a countervailing power. It is interesting to note that in order to limit or restrict state power and to be observant of potential abuse of power, civil society does not have to be democratic or behave civilly. "Uncivil society" or "bad civil society" contributes to pluralism and can function as a countervailing power. From the countervailing perspective, the internal level of democracy in civil society organizations is consequently of less importance. The levels of internal democracy and civicness are, however, important in contributing to patterns of civility or civic education:

> If civil society organizations are to function as 'large free schools' for democracy (in Tocqueville's term), they must function democratically in their internal process of decision making and leadership selection. And they should encourage and institutionalize multiple avenues for active participation among the members. The more their own organizational practices are based on political equality, reciprocal communication, mutual respect, and the rule of law, the more civil society organizations will socialize members into these democratic norms and the more they will generate the social trust, tolerance, cooperativeness, and civic competence that undergird a vibrant and liberal democracy (Diamond 1999: 228).

Whether civil society is democratic or not is a highly relevant question, as it impinges on certain aspects of civil society's democracy-building potential. Several authors have emphasized the importance of democratically structured organizations if they are to socialize citizens into democratic behavior (e.g. Hadenius & Uggla 1996: 1623; Brysk 2000: 152; Diamond 1999: 225-226). In short, organizations with vertical or patrimonial structures, such as clientelistic networks with particularistic practices, do not promote democratic behavior (Hadenius & Uggla 1996: 1623). How, then, do we measure the level of democracy in civil society organizations? Naturally, the conception of democracy outlined in Chapter Two refers to democracy at the state level, but we can still use more or less the same institutional requirements. Translated into a definition of organizational democracy, the polyarchy model would include: the members' rights to oppose and vote out the highest leadership of the organization. This requires the following institutions: an elected leadership, free and fair elections with universal suffrage and the right to run for office, and freedom of expression (cf. Dahl 1989: 220).[18]

One analytical problem concerns those organizations that have formal democratic structures but that in practice function differently, e.g. organizations characterized by patron-client relations, hierarchical leadership ideas, or subtle repression of dissidents within the organizations (see e.g. Scurrah 1996: 165-167). Sometimes the informal practice contains subtle exclusion mechanisms. For example, a strong, charismatic leader might be

an asset to the organization, as he or she may be successful in making demands on the government, or getting international attention and financial support. However, the price that the organization may have to pay is repression of dissident members' opinions. Another feature that affects civil society's ability to foster democracy is autonomy. Autonomy relates not only to autonomy from the state, but also from any individual leader or ruling clique. Autonomy for a civil society organization means that the agenda is not hijacked or subordinated to one person's or one group's interest (see Diamond 1999: 229-230; Dryzek 1996).

Moreover, inter-organizational relations are also an important indicator of the democracy-building potential of civil society. Some organizations that may well have internal democratic structures actually show a lack of respect for other organizations. Organizations can have goals which, by definition, discriminate against other groups in civil society. If civil society is to promote democracy, the goals and methods of its organizations should not be of an undemocratic or uncompromising character (Diamond 1999: 228; see also Brysk 2000: 159-160). This requirement is related to the idea of a civil society containing pluralism. In brief, this refers to the absence of any organization that claims to represent the interests of the whole society (Diamond 1999: 233). In sum, the internal structure of civil society, particularly the level of internal democracy, is important for our understanding of the state-supporting version of civil society.

The relation between civil society and democracy is admittedly complex. On the one hand, civil society can support the state by providing civic education, and on the other hand civil society is an antidote to or a countervailing power against the state. This discussion clearly demonstrates the need to take the political context, particularly the state, into consideration.

Bringing the State Back In

If we are to understand the complex relation between civil society and democracy, the political context must be reintroduced (see e.g. Whittington 1998; Berman 1997; Foley & Edwards 1996; Dryzek 1996). As described above, Putnam and other Neo-Tocquevillians have failed to

recognize that civil society not only has the potential of strengthening a democratic regime, but may also weaken the same regime. In order to understand whether a civil society is likely to weaken or strengthen a democracy, we must analyze civil society in relation to the prevailing political institutions. Sheri Berman, for example, argues that civil society flourished in inter-war Germany. But this associational life did not strengthen democracy. Rather, it exacerbated the divisions within the country. Hence civil society could fragment, rather than integrate, a society (Berman 1997). As John A. Booth & Patricia B. Richard's study of civil society in Central America shows, the character of the political regime clearly affects the formation and the nature of civil society (Booth & Richard 1998). Against this background, Berman contends that it is crucial to examine the political context in which civil society is situated in order to understand how political institutions shape the character of civil society and civil society's democracy-strengthening potential:

> If a country's political institutions are capable of channeling and redressing grievances, then associationism will probably buttress political stability and democracy by placing its resources and beneficial effects in the service of the status quo. […] If, on the other hand, political institutions are weak and/or the existing political regime is perceived to be ineffectual and illegitimate, then civil society activity may become an alternative to politics for dissatisfied citizens, increasingly absorbing their energies and satisfying their basic needs. In such situations, associationism will probably undermine political stability and have negative consequences for democracy by deepening cleavages, furthering dissatisfactions, and providing rich soil for oppositional movements. A flourishing civil society under these circumstances signals governmental and institutional failure and bodes ill for political stability and democracy (Berman 1997: 569-570).

In the same vein, Foley and Edwards argue that the reason why civil society is so poorly understood is that the prevailing political settlement is not taken into consideration. How collective action through civil society is pursued is therefore dependent on the responsiveness of state institutions. For example, an unresponsive authoritarian state is more likely to give rise to either aggressive

forms of civil society participation or apathy than a democratic state with institutions that hear and mediate citizen demands (Foley & Edwards 1996: 46-49; see Encarnación 2001: 54 for a similar argument).

The state is the enabler of civil society, as it provides the political-legal framework that is a pre-requisite for a civil society. Civil society needs state protection to act without fear of repression. The state can institutionalize and facilitate civil society's work by setting up the appropriate institutions and by providing legal protection and financial support. But by being an enabler of civil society the state can also restrict it. It may, for example, act coercively against certain civil society organizations. In discussing the case of India, Neera Chandhoke says that while the Indian state accepts organizations of industrialists and teacher unions, "it has a definite problem in respect of groups that challenge the legitimacy of the system." According to Chandhoke, the Indian state has acted in a notoriously coercive way against the movements of the landless peasants, and consequently the latter turn to violent methods (2001: 9):

> […] states simply happen to have their own notions of what is politically permissible, what is culturally permissible and what is socially permissible. And whereas these notions will *enable* some sections of civil society, they will necessarily *disable* others. State action, therefore, possesses momentous consequences for civil society inasmuch as it has the power to lay down the boundaries of what is politically permissible (Chandhoke 2001: 9-10, italics in orginal).

It is, of course, important to note that the relation between civil society and the state is not necessarily a relation based on opposition. There is, however, a constant interplay between civil society and the state and other parts of the political society. In sum, if we want to understand civil society's democracy-building functions, we must include the political context in our conceptual framework.

Summary

Civil society here refers to all the voluntarily formed non-profit collectivities that seek to promote or to protect an interest and that are part neither

of the state nor of the family sphere. Organizations that are concerned with strictly inward-looking activities rather than public ends, organizations that seek formal political power and organizations that are set up to make a profit for their owners or shareholders are not included in what we refer to as civil society. Civil society must be analytically separated from civic community in order to avoid tautological reasoning. Civil society is not inherently virtuous or conducive to democracy. Its democracy-building functions are partly shaped by the internal levels of democracy and civicness. Hence we need a more differentiated concept that accepts that civil society could actually be uncivil society if we are to improve our understanding of civil society's democracy-building functions. In addition, we need to take the political context into consideration. The state is the enabler of civil society, but it can also restrict or control civil society organizations. Thus, state-civil society relations constitute a crucial piece in the civil society and democracy jigsaw puzzle. Let us now, with these remarks in mind, turn to civil society's functions in the democratization process.

Notes

1 According to Hans L. Zetterberg, this was the first time that the concept of civil society appeared in the title of a volume (1995: 70).

2 As examples of accidental causes of the continued existence of the democratic republic in America, Tocqueville mentions the absence of neighbors and of a metropolis. America has no neighbors and, consequently, no major wars, or wars of conquest to fear. Another accidental cause is the absence of a metropolis. In big cities it is inevitable that people gang up and excite each other to make sudden and inconsiderate decisions (see Tocqueville 1997: 386-389, Volume I).

3 Among the laws, it is in particular the federal system and the local governance that are important, as they mitigate the potential of the tyranny of the majority. They teach the citizens the virtues of freedom. To federalism and local governance, Tocqueville adds the judicial power that also mitigates the majority (Tocqueville, 1997: 399, Volume I).

4 Local governance is described as *d'écueils cachés*.

5 G. W. F. Hegel's theory—of which civil society is only a limited part—has its origins in the natural law tradition and the universalism of individual rights (inspired by Kant), the distinction between state and society that was explicitly expressed by the Scottish Enlightenment, and finally, also inspired by the Scottish Enlightenment (especially Ferguson),

the new modern economy (Cohen & Arato 1992: 92). To Hegel, civil society is an ethos, or a set of norms that are constituted in personal interaction and in the interaction between the private and public spheres. Civil society—the associations, behavior and traditions—is characterized by a lack of institutionalized laws. The state—the formal judicial and political institutions and procedures—therefore harmonizes the myopia of wills and protects civil society from itself. Civil society embraces *Sittlichkeit* (a modern form of the Ancient ethos, universalistic norms) as well as *Antisittlichkeit* (egoism, self-interest and particularism) (Cohen & Arato 1992: 92-93). Civil society was thus characterized by tensions and potential conflict. A civil society that was too free might produce conflicts and thus needed state control. State institutions are the guarantor of universality and ethical laws, and the role of the state is to harmonize competing interests in society. In essence, civil society could not remain civil unless it was subjected to the state. It was only with the state's protective measures that individual freedom could be achieved in the context of social ethos (Van Rooy 1998a: 10; Cohen & Arato 1992: 91-93).

6 The Hegelian theories have been important to followers such as Marx, who focused mainly on the negative aspects of civil society (the dehumanizing and atomistic character). To Marx, civil society was a (capitalistic) self-interested and egoistical society (see Van Rooy 1998a: 10; Cohen & Arato 1992: 117). Another follower of Hegel—Antonio Gramsci—saw civil society as a sphere in which battles for and against capitalism were fought—a struggle for control over society. The state was the potential instrument of domination by the forces of capitalism. Gramsci can according to Cohen & Arato, "be said to reflect a modern renewal of the left radical critique of civil society" (Cohen & Arato 1992: 142). In this state-centric view, civil society needs the state to mediate between competing interests (e.g. Walzer 1995).

7 See Jenny Pearce (1997) for an interesting discussion of how the idea of new social movements emerged in the Latin American context.

8 However, Aleksander Smolar argues that the way the concept civil society was used in Central and Eastern Europe had little to do with the theoretical debate we have referred to above (1996: 24).

9 See David Lehmann (1990) for an extensive discussion of the Vatican II (1961-63), the Latin American Episcopal Conference (CELAM) in Medellín 1968, the emergence of liberation theology and the CEBs, *basismo* and social movements in Latin America.

10 Paolo Freire, who was teaching adult illiterates in Recife, Brazil, believed that *conscientização* could only be developed through critical educational efforts (Freire 1973: 19). Critical education forms critical attitudes and turns citizens into a state of awareness that forms a critical consciousness. In a paternalistic and non-democratic culture, political awareness and critical attitudes are favorable to the development of a democratic mentality. Participation, deliberation and dialogue are important elements in the development of a critical consciousness, which is indispensable for democratic development (Freire 1973: 36). For a detailed discussion of Freire's teaching methods and the Brazilian experience, see *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1972), *Education: The Practice of Freedom* (1976), and *Education for Critical Consciousness* (1973).

11 See Lars Trädgårdh (ed.) (1995) and (1999) for an interesting discussion of how the concept of civil society was treated in the Swedish debate.

12 See Benjamin Barber for a discussion of the libertarian and the communitarian perspective on civil society (1999: 11-25). See also Adam B. Seligman for a discussion of liberal versus republican versions of civil society, and of civil society and civic virtue. Seligman distinguishes between civil society in the Anglo-American tradition, in which moral is considered to be a private ideal, and the continental (republican) civic virtue tradition (Machiavelli, Rousseau and Arendt), which considers moral to be a communal or public enterprise (Seligman 1995).

13 For a discussion of civil society's Western origins and the implications for studies in other contexts, see Chris Hann & Elisabeth Dunn (eds.) (1996).

14 The concept of social capital first appeared in the work of James Coleman, who argued that social capital was a feature of social relations. For example, transactions were marked by the existence of norms of reciprocity and trust. These norms, which facilitated cooperation were a resource that Coleman called social capital. This is context-dependent, in the sense that social capital exists within groups. Coleman also notes that not every kind of social capital is equally valuable to facilitating collective action. The existence of social capital may facilitate transactions within fascist organizations, as well as within human rights advocacy groups. In his study from 1993, Putnam concentrated on social capital as a producer of civic spirit, and did not consider the "bad social capital". Foley & Edwards (1997) argue that social capital "is generally undertheorized and oversimplified", the reason being that current usage has ignored Coleman's original meaning, i.e., social capital in Coleman's writings is conceptualized as something neutral, something that could facilitate action. But in Putnam's and other Neo-Tocquevillians' writings social capital is regarded as something positive for the quality of democratic politics (Foley & Edwards 1997; see also Foley & Edwards 1998a and 1998b).

15 It should be noted, however, that Schmitter admits that civil society is not "an unmitigated blessing for democracy". Civil society can actually affect the functioning of democratic systems in negative ways (1997b: 247-248).

16 Of course, every choice of concepts is a reflection of a normative stance. However, we can still make a distinction between concepts and theories that are normatively justified on the one hand, and more empirically defined analytical categories on the other.

17 For a discussion of whether all associations are alike or produce the same social capital, see e.g. Carla M. Eatis (1998) who analyses choral groups, and Kenneth Newton (1997), who questions what sort of associations best produce social capital, and who concludes that schools, families, or working places are more important than formal associations for the generation of social capital. In a similar vein, Amber L. Seligson (1999) analyses whether participation in some kinds of associations is more likely to lead to democratic participation (measured as making demands on public officials) than participation in other kinds of associations. She concludes that there is a difference between the different kinds of associations. It is particularly participation in community development groups that correlates positively with demand making. Labor unions, church-related groups or cooperatives, for example, do not have any significant correlation with demand making.

18 The sixth and seventh institutional requirements of Dahl's polyarchy-model (alternative information and associational autonomy) are of less importance for measuring organizational democracy.

Chapter Five

Civil Society in Post-Transition Societies
A Framework for Analysis

In this chapter the last building blocks will be added to the conceptual framework that will guide the empirical analysis. It is argued here that the functions of civil society are different during the transition as compared to the post-transition period. Whereas civil society's main function in the transition phase seems to be a countervailing power function, the functions in the post-transition period are a more complex mix of state supporting and countervailing powers.

Civil society's democracy-building potential is, however, constrained by a number of factors. As pointed out in Chapter Four, civil society's internal level of democracy affects some of its democracy-building functions. An undemocratic civil society could still serve as an antidote to the state, but is unlikely to generate civic education. If we are to understand civil society's democracy-building potential in the post-transition period, the political context must be taken into consideration. A state that tries to co-opt or manipulate civil society clearly restricts its democracy-building potential by undermining its countervailing power. The prior non-democratic regime leaves a legacy that cannot be ignored if we want to understand civil society's democracy-building function. Finally, the international dimension is also included in the framework. Many civil society organizations in newly established democracies are recipients of development assistance. The existing theories of civil society in the democratization process are limited in the sense that they do not consider how an external impact in terms of development assistance affects civil society's relation to democracy. In this chapter it is argued that external support for local civil societies could have positive as well as negative effects on civil society's democracy-building potential.

Civil Society in the Transition

The process of democratization contains several sub-processes or phases, and the functions of civil society seem to vary between the different phases. If compared to consolidation studies, transition literature has not paid much attention to civil society. It has been argued that the strictly elite perspective of transitology underestimated the potential democracy-building function of civil society (Collier & Mahoney 1999: 97-98). If transitology took any notice of the links between state and society, it was in terms of political parties, not social movements (Gill 2000: 61-62).

There are some exceptions to the tendency of disregarding civil society, however. Guillermo O'Donnell & Philippe C. Schmitter, for example, suggest that once a split within the authoritarian regime has become visible, a general mobilization is likely to occur, referring to this as the "resurrection of civil society" (1986: 48). After having been repressed by an authoritarian regime, citizenship and political identities may reemerge. The resurrection is likely to take place after the transition is initiated. However, a cultural and intellectual elite (artists, poets, musicians, and writers) is likely to be a predecessor or an avant-garde that can promulgate public opposition that will weaken the regime before the transition is initiated. It is through their capacity to express themselves with "oblique metaphors" that artists, writers and actors can deliver criticism against the regime, even though the political climate does not allow regime criticism and the freedom of speech is restricted (O'Donnell & Schmitter 1986: 49). Once the transition is set in motion, a more general activity may take place among professional associations, human rights organizations or other groups that speak out against the authoritarian regime (O'Donnell & Schmitter 1986: 50-52). Eventually, mobilization is spread to the working classes and grassroots movements, and these layers are likely to pose the greatest challenge to the authoritarian regime.[1] This mobilization is likely to be followed by a popular upsurge:

> Trade unions, grass-roots movement, religious groups, intellectuals, artists, clergymen, defenders of human rights, and professional associations all support each other's efforts toward democratization

> and coalesce into a greater whole which identifies itself as 'the people'—*o povo, el pueblo, il popolo, le people, ho laos* (O'Donnell & Schmitter 1986: 54, italics in original).

This united front against the authoritarian regime, which O'Donnell & Schmitter refer to as the resurrection of civil society, is likely to disappear after the transition, as the common identity is split into gender, class, ethnicity, and language (1986: 55).

Larry Diamond questions O'Donnell & Schmitter's suggestion that every transition starts with a split within the authoritarian regime and is followed by a general mobilization, arguing that there have been cases where a popular upsurge preceded the split within the authoritarian regime.[2] He criticizes transitology for being too elite-focused and unable to capture cases where a popular mobilization precedes and causes the split within the authoritarian regime or influences the transition in other ways (1999: 234). In a number of cases—the Philippines in 1986, South Korea in 1987, Chile in 1988, and Poland in 1989—civil society played a crucial role, and sometimes also a leading role, in initiating a transition to democracy. According to Diamond, there are also cases in Sub-Saharan Africa in which civil society has been an important actor (Diamond 1999: 235-237).

> In denouncing abuses of human rights, keeping records of abuses and helping defend the rights of victims, human rights groups challenge the state's use of its coercive apparatus. Through education and consciousness-raising activities, these groups help undermine the legitimacy of authoritarian regimes and encourage other groups to express their dissent. *Las Madres de la Plaza de Mayo* in Argentina, for example, stood up to the military regime when apparently no one else would, and spurred other opposition groups to voice their dissent publicly (Oxhorn 1995: 261).[3]

In the same vein, Anders Uhlin emphasizes the role civil society could play in a pre-transition phase and during the actual transition by putting pressure on the authoritarian regime for a return to democratic rule. Uhlin admits, however, that civil society is not necessarily pro-democratic in its orientations (2002: 182).

Graeme Gill, who also focuses on civil society in the transition, claims that the presence of a strong and independent civil society increases the chances that a political crisis will lead to a democratic transition rather than a mere change of leadership (2000: 42). If civil society is weak and does not respond to a legitimacy crisis, caused by e.g. defeat in war or economic stagnation, the crisis and subsequent split within the regime are much more likely to lead to the inauguration of yet another authoritarian regime rather than a democratic one. Without popular pressure there is no reason for the regime elite to initiate democratic reforms.[4] Rather, an authoritarian regime may attempt some moderate liberalization projects to regain legitimacy, without any ambition to initiate a real transition to democracy. But an active civil society can facilitate a democratic orientation of the regime change by putting pressure on the authoritarian regime to avoid the replacement of one authoritarian regime by another (Gill 2000: 60).[5]

Gill's study is an important contribution towards understanding the role of civil society in the transition process. Without popular pressure there are few incentives for an authoritarian government to solve a political crisis by means of a transition rather than a simple leadership replacement. However, this requires a well-developed civil society that can put pressure on the regime:

> Indeed, it is the presence of such [powerful] civil society forces, and fear of the consequences of ignoring them, that encourages most reformers to seek to bring about change that ultimately turns into democratization. Without such pressure, the incentive for élites to work out their differences without substantial change to the broader ruling structure would be almost irresistible (Gill 2000: 126).

But the role of civil society in the transition phase is, of course, dependent on the mode of transition. As was seen in Chapter Two, we can identify three main modes of transition. Naturally, civil society's role is more limited in a transition by means of transaction (i.e. an elite-initiated and controlled transition) than in a transition by means of extrication (i.e. a joint action between the governing elite and opposition) or a transition by means of replacement (i.e. a breakdown of the authoritarian regime) (Gill 2000: 127; 174). The relative strengths of civil society and the governing

elite thus seem important for our understanding of what role civil society can play (Gill 2000: 180-183).

In essence, civil society's focal task is to function as a countervailing power, and as a source of pluralism during the liberalization and transition phases. Civil society can exert pressure for a transition to democracy and give reforms a democratic orientation. However, once the transition has come to an end, which is marked by the inauguration of democratically elected representatives, civil society's nature and functions become quite different. A transition rarely results in a flawless democracy. Therefore, civil society's function in a post-transition development is a more explicitly democracy-building one. The problems of efficiency and legitimacy accentuate the need for a civil society capable of supporting the democratic regime. Civil society as a countervailing power is still important, but more problematic, exactly because of the efficiency-legitimacy problem. A new democracy might be vulnerable to an intense civil society that demands far-reaching reforms.

Civil Society in the Post-Transition Period

In order to increase our understanding of the manifold democracy-building functions that civil society could have in a post-transition society, a framework for analysis will be outlined here. There have been some prior attempts to categorize civil society's democracy-building functions. In *Developing Democracy Toward Consolidation* (1999), for example, Diamond claims that civil society has thirteen different roles to play in promoting democratic development.[6] While each and every one of the thirteen roles Diamond outlines seems reasonable, one could certainly question the analytical gains of a model that includes thirteen roles for civil society. It is an unwieldy model, and therefore an alternative and more straightforward categorization will be sketched here. The position adopted here is that civil society can have four broad and partly overlapping democracy-building functions in the post-transition period: as an agenda setter, as an educator, as a counterpart, and as a source of new political alternatives. These functions overlap with Diamond's thirteen roles, but it seems reasonable to argue that a more frugal framework is a more clear-

cut analytical tool. Every single one of these four functions includes elements of both the countervailing power and of the civility-generating versions of civil society. Naturally other functions than the ones outlined here could be envisaged, but these four capture the most important democracy-building functions in the post-transition period.

Civil Society as an Agenda Setter

Civil society can contribute to democratic development by setting priorities for agendas. One aspect of agenda setting is related to what Diamond refers to as "deepening democracy", i.e. making "the formal structures of democracy more liberal, accountable, representative, and accessible—in essence, more democratic" (1999: 74). By observing potential flaws or problems, civil society could act as an agenda setter and draw attention to democratic deficits. By informing citizens, through the media or public campaigns, or by turning directly to elected politicians, civil society might make the state of democracy appear as an issue on the political agenda. The political elite in post-transition democracies often have motives for not raising the question themselves. By identifying democratic deficits and demanding reforms, civil society can contribute to political institutionalization. Civil society can, for example, draw attention to a lack of, and demand more, transparency in the public administration, an issue that politicians may be unwilling to raise. In Latin America many of the democratic deficits typically concern the military autonomy and reserved domains of power (see Valenzuela 1992). Reserved domains of power are likely to be the result of pact-making among the central actors during the transition, and civilian politicians may find it difficult or may simply be unwilling to break these pacts. Against this background, civil society is sometimes the only actor that can challenge the existing system and the only actor that sets these kinds of priorities for the agenda.

Civil society as an agenda setter can also have implications for the performance or efficiency of the democratic regime, which is central to a widespread legitimacy among the population. Hence agenda setting is not restricted to issues related to the democratic system, but covers other issues as well, e.g. development projects and the general welfare of the citizens.

As an agenda setter, civil society can be an important ideational power and a creator of public opinion that works through interest representation and articulation. Civil society's agenda-setting function tends to overlap with political parties in a democratic system, namely in representing and aggregating interests. However, there is a major difference between civil society and political parties. Civil society seeks to influence, but has no aspirations to formal power. In a sense, civil society can act as a surrogate for political parties, especially in those post-transition societies where the political parties are associated with the prior non-democratic regime or lack a popular base.

In sum, civil society as an agenda setter can contribute to democratic development by raising issues concerning democratic deficits that the governing elite and other actors, e.g. political parties, might be unwilling to put on the political agenda. This could improve political institutionalization and may eventually result in increased legitimacy for the democratic regime.

Civil Society as an Educator

Civil society can also contribute to democratic development by educating citizens and spreading information about and knowledge of the democratic system to them. Moreover, civil society may provide an arena where a more informal learning process can take place. It might be unclear to people with a limited experience of democratic rule what their rights and their duties are, and what they can expect from politicians and civil servants. Civil society can provide an education for democracy by teaching citizens the basic principles and procedures of the democratic system, i.e. informing them of their rights and duties as citizens in a democracy. As a result, citizens may be able to combine an understanding of with trust in the democratic system without losing a healthy skepticism as regards the performance of the politicians (Carothers & Ottaway 2000: 4). The educational function also includes educating and training politicians and civil servants. This may concern leadership training, or education on specific issues such as human rights. In this manner, civil society can become a pool of competence for organizational management as well as in a variety of fields such as development, democracy, and human rights.

Another aspect of the educational function is the more informal process of learning by doing that can take place within organizations. This refers to the fact that by participating in civil society organizations, individuals may become conscious of democratic principles through a process of learning by doing. Organizations are thus seen as a training ground, or a school of democracy, in Tocqueville's term, where citizens could learn democratic principles and civility (e.g. Hadenius & Uggla 1996: 1623). However, this democracy-building function of democracy requires democratically structured and civil organizations, as it does not seem likely that citizens could practice democracy in non-democratic organizations or are likely to learn civil behavior such as tolerance for others in an uncivil organization.

Civil society as an educator can provide civic education and raise public awareness and understanding of the democratic system and thereby improve the democratic competence among citizens that is necessary for participation in the political process. Civil society can also contribute to an increased competence among civil servants and politicians, which can result in an improved regime performance and eventually a higher legitimacy for the democratic regime. Finally, if civil society organizations are democratically structured and civil, democratic attitudes and behavior can be developed through participation in these organizations.

Civil Society as a Counterpart

Civil society can also act as a counterpart of the government or of state agencies. This counterpart function refers to partnership or coalitions between the political society and civil society. It may involve joint projects, for example in development work, in which civil society organizations cooperate with governmental institutions, or some form of coalition building (concertation). As a counterpart, civil society can contribute to improving regime performance by having an advisory function and by cooperating with state agencies for an efficient policy implementation. Civil society organizations can also ensure the efficient implementation of certain policies by participating and monitoring, thereby increasing public accountability (see e.g. Hadenius & Uggla 1996: 1628; Scholte 2002: 294). It is often argued—particularly concerning development

work—that civil society has a comparative advantage over state agencies by being more efficient, having more contacts, more knowledge of the needs, and more field-presence than do state agencies (see e.g. Burnell 1997: 177-178; Hudock 1999: 8). Thus, a partnership in which civil society makes a critical contribution by making policy suggestions and cooperates with state agencies for an efficient implementation could increase regime performance. Improved regime performance, in its turn, is likely to increase the legitimacy of the regime (Lipset 1959; Turner & Martz 1997). Civil society does not always contribute to improved efficiency, but may still contribute to an increased perception of the regime's legitimacy among the population by demonstrating a trust in the government. It is important to note here that civil society should not act as a mere rubberstamp for government policies. The democracy-building potential is undermined if civil society organizations uncritically receive funding to implement government policies (Scholte 2002: 297). The counterpart function naturally raises the question of civil society autonomy. Whereas civil society can strengthen democracy by being a counterpart, it must remain autonomous from the political power in order to be conducive to democracy.

Civil society as a counterpart can contribute to improved regime performance in many areas, e.g. health care and education. Improved regime performance can also generate increased legitimacy for the regime. Many new democracies are in a weak position, because they do not have a history of high performance and consequently no reservoir of support (Diamond & Linz 1989: 46). This places them in a precarious situation, and therefore increased efficiency is important for developing a widespread belief in the legitimacy of the democratic regime.

Civil Society as a Source of New Political Alternatives

Civil society can also contribute to democratic development by being a source of pluralism (Hadenius & Uggla 1996: 1622) and, more specifically, a source of new political alternatives. Many post-transition societies often have weak political parties that lack a popular base. The existing political parties may, for example, be associated with the prior non-

democratic regime or with clientelistism, and hence lack legitimacy among the voters. In addition, newly established democracies with a limited experience of democracy may also be hampered by the absence of a democratic leadership or professional civil servants. Against this background, civil society has the potential to contribute to democratic development by being a source of new political alternatives. For example, civil society movements may transform themselves into political parties. Particularly movements that have been forced to work clandestinely may emerge as new political parties that could challenge existing parties that may be associated with the prior authoritarian rule. Consequently, civil society could improve representation and increase pluralism in society.

In the same vein, there might be a transfer of leadership from civil society to political society. Competent leaders who have a background in a civil society movement could play an important role in the post-transition period. Particularly if the legitimacy of the new democratic regime is initially low, political leaders who are trusted by the population are an asset. In addition, a professional public administration is a necessary feature of a democratic regime. If patrimonialism prevailed during the authoritarian regime, new administrative staff that is not associated with patrimonialism or corruption can improve the efficiency and the legitimacy of the public administration. Public administration staff might be recruited from civil society. In many authoritarian regimes, civil society gradually takes over the delivery of welfare services from the state, and consequently there is often considerable knowledge accumulated in civil society. Civil society is a source of pluralism not only in terms of new political parties or leaders, but also in terms of organizational management, which could be a challenge for the political parties Thus, civil society may serve as a source of inspiration for modernizing the party structure.

Civil society as a source of pluralism can contribute to democratic development by producing new political alternatives and by providing a multitude of perspectives that can improve representation and stimulate debates. If the existing political alternatives are associated with the authoritarian regime, the emergence of new political parties may contribute to increasing the performance as well as the legitimacy of the democratic regime. In a similar way, new competent political leaders and staff in public administration can

contribute to political institutionalization and improved regime performance and can, consequently, increase the legitimacy of the regime.

However, civil society's democracy-building potential is constrained by a number of factors. Civil society does not act in isolation, but its ability to perform the functions accounted for above is constrained by the legacy of the prior non-democratic regime, and the external influence exerted by donors.

A Structured-Contingency Approach

It is widely recognized in the literature on democratization that the character of the prior non-democratic regime has implications for the paths available for democratic transition and future prospects for democratic development (see e.g. Linz & Stepan 1996: 55; Gunther et al. 1995: 399-402). In short, history matters.[7] The old regime leaves a legacy that cannot be ignored if we want to understand a democratic transition and the prospects for a future democratic development, one reason being that the new democratic elite is constrained by the legacy of the authoritarian regime (Gill 2000: 89-90). However, when analyzing the implications of the prior regime type, it is imperative to avoid structural reductionism or determinism. In a similar vein, it is equally important to avoid regarding civil society as unconstrained by surrounding structures and thus end up in excessive voluntarism. What we need is a meta-theory that places collective decisions and political interactions within a framework of structural constraints (see Lundquist 1987). With a structured-contingency approach we could understand how actors and the decisions they make are conditioned by socioeconomic structures, political institutions and the legacy of the authoritarian period. These structures may restrict or enhance the options available to different political actors (Karl 1990: 7-6). Einar Berntzen claims that if we perceive democratization as the result of crafting, then we easily end up in excessive voluntarism:

> Even granted the tremendous uncertainty triggered by a regime transition, the decisions made by various actors respond to and are conditioned by the socioeconomic structures and political institu-

> tions already present. These may be decisive either by restricting or by enhancing the options available to the different political actors attempting to 'craft' democracy (Berntzen 1993: 593).

For the purpose of this study, structured contingency will be interpreted as an approach in which the prior regime type imposes certain constraints upon central actors, such as civil society, and their choices. This does not imply that the nature of the authoritarian regime determines either the nature of civil society in a post-transition society or its relations with political, economic, or other elites in society, but the structural conditions "become embodied in political institutions and rules which subsequently mold the preferences and capacities of individuals during and after regime changes" (Karl 1990: 7; see also Karl & Schmitter 1991). Consequently it seems reasonable to argue that the legacy of the prior regime type imposes constraints or facilitates certain kinds of behavior on the part of the actors involved. Accordingly, following the actor-structure approach, we accept that neither structures nor actors have ontological primacy, but are in constant interaction and mutually constitutive (Lundquist 1987: 46-47).

Implications of Prior Regime Type

How, then, can we proceed with an analysis of post-transition development from a structured-contingency approach? There are numerous theories of different types of non-democratic regimes (see Brooker 2000), but for the purpose of this study, Juan J. Linz & Alfred Stepan's regime classification provides a useful categorization. In their volume from 1996 they present a typology of regime types that includes: authoritarian, totalitarian, post-totalitarian and sultanistic regimes.[8] The four dimensions that form the basis of this typology are: pluralism, ideology, leadership, and mobilization (Linz & Stepan 1996: 38-54). *Authoritarian systems* normally have limited political pluralism and extensive social and economic pluralism, which is legally protected. Leadership in authoritarian systems is often based on more or less predictable norms, and the leaders are usually not charismatic. Ideology in authoritarian systems is rare; there are seldom any guiding ideologies. Finally, authoritarian systems have

no particular political mobilization. A completely different type of regime is that of *totalitarian systems*, which are characterized by an almost complete absence of pre-existing political, economic, and social pluralism. The leadership is often charismatic and with undefined limits. In totalitarian systems ideology is a central feature, often articulating a utopia from which the leaders' legitimacy is derived. In addition, an extensive mobilization with obligatory regime-controlled organizations and no space for private life characterizes this kind of system (Linz & Stepan 1996: 40).

As opposed to totalitarian systems, *post-totalitarian systems* have a significant degree of social pluralism. Linz & Stepan maintain that in a mature post-totalitarian system there may also exist a so-called parallel culture, or some signs of civil society. Pluralism in post-totalitarian systems is, however, more limited than in authoritarian systems. In post-totalitarian systems the leader tends to be bureaucratic and technocratic rather than charismatic. Thus, the leadership resembles the authoritarian leadership. In the post-totalitarian system an official ideology still exists, but is weakened, as is mobilization. In *sultanistic regimes*, finally, the level of pluralism "is subject to unpredictable and despotic intervention". There is no rule of law and a very low level of institutionalization. The leadership is highly personalistic and arbitrary and has no constraints. The ideology is often focused on the glorification of the leader. The level of mobilization is low and sporadic and is likely to be of a ceremonial type (Linz & Stepan 1996: 42-54). It should be noted that the regime types accounted for above are analytical ideal types, and consequently empirical cases do not fit perfectly into these categories.

Different types of political regimes pose different kinds of challenges to the prospects for democratic development in newly established democracies. Linz & Stepan use their categorization of regime types to analyze how prior regime types affect the development of five arenas, which they consider necessary for democratic consolidation. These arenas are: political society, civil society, rule of law, a working state apparatus, and an economic society (1996: 7-15).[9] What we are interested here is how we can understand civil society and its democracy-building function in the light of the prior non-democratic regime. Linz & Stepan state that civil society can exist in authoritarian systems and be quite lively. In contrast,

civil society is unlikely to exist in a totalitarian system, as pluralism is not accepted. Regime-created organizations exist, but there is hardly an autonomous civil society. In post-totalitarian systems some pluralism is accepted, and there are signs of a civil society, often in terms of movements that have developed as a reaction to the totalitarian rule. In sultanistic regimes a civil society could exist, but it is threatened by unpredictable and despotic intervention (1996: 40-56).[10] Linz & Stepan conclude that, while democratization seems very difficult for totalitarian and sultanistic regimes, it might seem a little easier for authoritarian and post-totalitarian regimes.

The existence of pluralism in the preceding regime is important, but there are other aspects of the prior non-democratic regime that can affect the prospects of democratic development in general, and civil society and its democracy-building functions in particular. Richard Gunther et al. claim that the non-democratic regime's relative harshness towards the population and the people's collective memory may contribute to negative legitimacy (1995: 400). Samuel P. Huntington also discusses the character and the relative harshness of the preceding regime, but reaches a somewhat different conclusion. He argues that the peril of authoritarian nostalgia is more likely to be a problem in countries in which the authoritarian regime was not particularly harsh towards the citizens (Huntington 1991: 256-257). Based on a case study of Brazil, Guillermo O'Donnell argues in the same vein that a low degree of repressiveness, economic success and negotiated transition pose difficulties for democratic development in new democracies (1992: 31-32). This phenomenon is sometimes referred to as the "paradox of success". The collective memory of the non-democratic period is less negative as compared to cases where the regime has been brutal and destroyed the economy (e.g. a sultanistic regime in which the level of repression has been high, and the rulers have enriched themselves). In cases characterized by economic success and less repression, new authoritarian actors may more easily emerge. The reasons for this may, for example, be the existence of a middle class that has benefited from the economic growth, and the absence of a new political leadership and bureaucratic staff. Regression to an authoritarian rule does not seem so bad, given that the prior regime was relatively non-repressive and there might be a belief that a new authoritarian regime will repeat this pattern

(O'Donnell 1992: 33-36). One related issue concerns the duration of the non-democratic period. Countries that have been ruled by authoritarian methods for a long period of time face a difficult path, as the population has no prior experience of democratic values and norms (Gunther et al. 1995: 400). This could affect civil society in several ways. If the non-democratic regime has repressed the population with harsh methods, this can create a culture of fear, a general distrust and a withdrawal from public space (see e.g. Kruijt & Koonings 1999: 1-30). Following the paradox-of-success argument, it could be assumed that if the non-democratic regime was not very repressive, civil society is less concerned with strengthening democracy.

Finally, the mode of transition is generally assumed to have implications for the post-transitional setting (see e.g. Gunther et al. 1995: 402; Schmitter 1995: 17-18). "The type of democracy will depend significantly (but not exclusively) on the mode of transition from autocracy" (Schmitter 1995: 18). The mode of transition sets the context within which the actors can try to influence the outcome of the transition and molds the power relations among the central actors. This naturally affects civil society's position in society, its legitimacy and ambitions. It has been argued that a slow, gradual transition based on elite negotiation is preferable for the future stability of the democratic regime (Gunther et al. 1995: 402-403; Karl & Schmitter 1991). Pacts are, however, problematic from a democratic perspective as they may include anti-democratic groups, e.g. the military, and exclude other actors, e.g. civil society organizations. A transition that involves pact-making with the military may create a situation in which civilian politicians avoid challenging the military's autonomy. If civil society is excluded from the pacts, this may create frustration among civil society organizations, as they are left with no influence over the transition. If civil society is part of pact-making with the military that involves, for example, amnesties for abuses committed against human rights, its legitimacy could erode.

To sum up this section, we have argued for a structured-contingency perspective in which the prior non-democratic regime is considered to have an influence on the post-transition setting, and more specifically on the nature of civil society and its democracy-building function. But it is not only the prior non-democratic regime that must be considered if we

want to understand civil society in the post-transition period. The current political context and the governments' strategies towards civil society must also be taken into consideration.

State-Civil Society Relations

In Chapter Four it was argued that the state is the enabler of civil society, as it provides the political-legal framework (rule of law, freedom of association etc.) for associational life. Let us now turn to a discussion of how the political context affects civil society's democracy-building functions. The relation between civil society and democracy can only be understood if the prevailing political setting is taken into consideration (e.g. Berman 1997; Foley & Edwards 1996; Booth & Richard 1998).

As argued above, a civil society is more likely to exist in authoritarian, and perhaps in post-totalitarian regimes, than in totalitarian or sultanistic regimes. The main reason for this is the higher degree of social pluralism. However, even though an authoritarian regime accepts social and economic pluralism we must, in order to understand civil society's democracy-building potential, analyze the state-civil society relations. A governing elite that perceives civil society as a threat might use different strategies to undermine its potential power, e.g. by splitting civil society by favoring certain groups, or by attempting to include civil society and thereby restrict its countervailing power. Philip Oxhorn states that in Latin America social forces were "contained through limited processes of *controlled inclusion*" (1995: 254, italics in orginal). The governing elites used clientelistic and populistic strategies to control popular participation (Oxhorn 1995: 252; Mouzelis 1995: 237; Malloy 1987: 241), and consequently the autonomy of collective actors was weakened. One aspect of the state-civil society relations is the state's ability to include civil society, and thereby take control of oppositional interests. Civil society's strength is therefore based on its capacity "simultaneously to *resist subordination* to the state and to *demand inclusion* into national political structures" (Oxhorn 1995: 252, italics in original). In Latin America, controlled inclusion made it possible for the state to control civil society. This pattern of controlled participation was institutionalized by means of populism and clientelism (Oxhorn 1995: 254-255).

Co-opting, or including, strategies are not reserved for authoritarian governing elites but occur in democracies as well. In a democratic context, civil society is likely to be the main autonomous countervailing power that controls state power and provides important space for dissenting views. If civil society vacates this oppositional area and is subsumed into political society, the governing elite no longer has to fear opposition and demands from society (see Scholte 2002: 297-298 for a similar argument). What might be interpreted as a democratic gain is perhaps better interpreted as a democratic loss, as the price to be paid is a less dynamic civil society. The future implications may also include fewer demands for further democratization. According to John S. Dryzek: "[t]he dynamics of democratization reveal a subtle interplay between inclusion and exclusion, the state and civil society" (1996: 476). Mexico is an example of a strong state that has dominated the weak civil society by populist means. Inclusion in the state thus refers to corporatist arrangements by which autonomous organizations are co-opted by the state to serve what is defined as a common public interest. This is a problem in any effort to strengthen democracy, because it tends to accord some organizations a more favorable position than others (Dryzek 1996: 475-485). How states are organized in terms of exclusion and inclusion therefore has important implications for the democratic vitality of civil society (Dryzek 1996: 482).

Another potential loss for democracy is that the groups that are included will gain some access, but no real influence. According to Dryzek, there is no reason for interests in civil society to wish to be included—they can still act in various ways to change public policy. For a flourishing civil society, then, state exclusion is actually preferable to state inclusion. In Dryzek's words, "passive exclusion", i.e. when civil society is left alone, is preferable to "active exclusion", i.e. when attacks are carried out to intimidate civil society organizations. Accordingly, avoiding inclusion does not mean that civil society has to become powerless (Dryzek 1996: 480-483).

Co-optation of civil society can occur in democracies as well as in non-democracies. In a study of NGOs in Costa Rica and Nicaragua, Laura Macdonald concludes that in neither of these countries did NGOs develop autonomously. In democratic Costa Rica "[p]otentially opposi-

tional forces were drawn towards the state which coopted them and neutralized them politically" (Macdonald 1997: 150). The levels of citizen participation and community organization were high, but citizens were linked to the state, and independent organizations were slow to develop. In Nicaragua, many NGOs emerged after the Sandinistas seized power in 1979. However, FSLN played an active role in civil society by promoting mass organizations: "Participation thus became increasingly formalized and ritualistic, and the policies of the mass organizations often responded to demands from the party rather than from their members" (Macdonald 1997: 151). Consequently the Nicaraguan civil society became intimately involved with FSLN. Macdonald's study shows that state and civil society became intimately linked in the 1980s and that civil society did not develop autonomously from the state (1997: 152). Accordingly, in both Nicaragua and Costa Rica civil society lost what we have called its countervailing power. Inclusive strategies used by the governing elite are clearly an example of how the political context can affect civil society's role in a democratization process.

Another aspect of the political context is the political parties and how they relate to civil society. The functions of civil society organizations and of the political parties sometimes overlap. During an authoritarian rule, political parties are likely to play a limited role, and are sometimes banned. Interest articulation and interest representation are then often concentrated in civil society organizations. After a transition, political parties will probably reassume their status as the main link between the citizens and the state, and civil society associations have to step back, whatever role they may have had during the authoritarian period (Oxhorn 1995: 266-267; Uggla 2000: 26-27). In the transition to democracy, civil society must consequently adapt to a new political context, which could be difficult, particularly for those organizations that played an important role during the authoritarian regime and for a return to democracy (Uggla 2000: 26-27).[11] Oxhorn argues, however, that if the party system is weak and not as firmly rooted in society, civil society organizations may continue to play the role that they had during the authoritarian rule (1995: 266-267).

The International Dimension

Civil society's democracy-building functions are affected by the external influence, particularly the external influence exerted by donors. Traditionally, democratization has been regarded as a domestic affair. However, over the last decade arguments have been raised for the need to consider the international context's impact upon democratization processes (see e.g. Schmitter 1996; Whitehead 1996; Pridham 1991). Arguably, international influence is not the most important factor in a regime change, but it is probably more influential than originally assumed. As Huntington showed in his influential *Third Wave of Democratization* (1991), there has been a noticeable increase since 1974 in the number of transitions to democracy. It is unlikely that it is purely domestic factors that have caused this global wave of democratization. It seems more reasonable to search for causes in the international structure or international development (see e.g. Karvonen 1997: 110).

In a "globalized" world characterized by increased interconnectedness and intersection of national and international processes, democratization does not take place in isolation. According to the same logic, civil society and its role in the democratization process cannot be understood unless proper attention is paid to external influence. International networks of NGOs and transnational social movements that increasingly communicate and interact over territorial boundaries are examples of a "global civil society." This has emerged as a response to modern communication media, and opens up possibilities of new forms of deliberation and participation (see e.g. Held 1995: 123-127). Thus, in order to understand civil society in a democratization process, we must include the external dimension. It is particularly one aspect of the external dimension that is important for our understanding of civil society and its democracy-building function, namely the increasing trend of donor community to channel aid through, or to direct aid to, civil society organizations.

Laurence Whitehead categorizes the impact of international factors on democratization into three dimensions: contagion, control, and consent (1996). "Contagion" refers to the diffusion of ideas and experiences from one country to another, i.e. the process when countries copy each other's

political institutions (Whitehead 1996: 4-18).[12] Contagion often takes place within a region where the structural conditions of the countries resemble each other. It may also be that a specific idea is popular at the time (Karvonen 1997: 115). However, not only pro-democratic, but also anti-democratic ideas are spread. "Control" refers to the idea that one state forces another state to replace a non-democratic regime with a democratic one. Control is thus the promotion of democracy through explicit policies with positive or negative sanctions. Such policies might include, for example, election monitoring. "Consent", finally, refers to a complex interplay between international processes and domestic groups that may generate democratic norms, attitudes, and expectations among the population. It refers to processes by which domestic groups change their norms and preferences (Whitehead 1996: 4-18). To these three categories Philippe C. Schmitter (1996) adds a more recent kind of international influence, "conditionality", which refers to a calculated use of coercion by attaching specific conditions to development assistance or trade. The International Monetary Fund's (IMF) use of political criteria before loans are granted is, of course, a case in point. However, it is not only international financial institutions that use conditionality. States and organizations, national as well as international, could also use political criteria (Schmitter 1996: 30).

How do international factors affect civil society and its democracy-building potential? Here we must turn to what has been referred to as the NGO literature. This literature is policy-oriented and focuses on development policies and practice, i.e. such issues as donor-recipient relations, aid efficiency, development, and obviously the (development) NGOs' role in the development process.[13] The focus is on development NGOs, which are primarily seen as channels for distributing aid, and not (at least not in a theoretically sophisticated way) as actors in the democratic process. One aim of this section is therefore to bridge the gap between the NGO-literature and democratization studies. Several of the newly established democracies in the Third World are aid recipients, and against this background it seems reasonable to argue that the nature of local civil societies and their democracy-building potential are affected by the policies of the donor community. In order to increase our understanding

of civil society's democracy-building function in newly established democracies, the external factor must thus be taken into account. Let us now turn to a discussion of the donors' engagement in civil society and the practice of creating, supporting and strengthening civil society as a way to promote democracy and development.

Supporting Local Civil Societies

In the mid-1980s, civil society appeared on the donor community's agenda. The 1980s had been a time of severe criticism of development assistance, and people's confidence in the effectiveness of development aid was low. In addition, aid fatigue was increasing (see e.g. Burnell 1997: 189-191; Howell & Pearce 2001: 4-5). Aid fatigue is often triggered by economic difficulties in the donor countries and pressures for increased public spending in, for example, the area of health care (see Burnell 1997: 190-191). Hence both confidence in effective development assistance and the willingness to give aid to Third World countries were low. In the light of this, support to local civil societies became increasingly popular because of what we might refer to as the "efficiency argument". Aid channeled through, and to, civil society seemed attractive, as development NGOs had a reputation of being small-scale, efficient, flexible, non-bureaucratic and cost-efficient. Moreover, development NGOs are usually regarded as having considerable knowledge of the needs as well as local contacts and field presence and consequently as more likely to reach the poorest (see e.g. Burnell 1997: 176-179; Hudock 1999: 8). In essence, development assistance channeled through civil society was seen as more efficient than traditional bilateral aid.

In the late 1980s, there was a disillusion with the state as a promoter of development and democracy. Particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa, the failure of implementing structural adjustment programs (SAP) was explained with reference to weak, inefficient and corrupt states. Against this background the donor community searched for new forms of aid and political conditionality (Howell & Pearce 2001: 40). It has also been argued that in many states the implementation of structural adjustment programs had reduced the state apparatus to the extent that it was no

longer capable of delivering basic social service to the citizens. Civil society was therefore seen as a strategy to prevent social unrest, and to fill the gap and replace the state in providing basic social service (see e.g. Van Rooy & Robinson 1998: 41; Macdonald 1997: 150; Whaites 2000: 134).

With the end of the Cold War and the collapse of Communism, foreign policy was no longer controlled by Cold-War imperatives and consequently, foreign aid was no longer driven by security concerns (Van Rooy & Robinson 1998: 58; Carothers & Ottaway 2000: 5-6). In the post-Cold War context, democracy and good governance became explicit goals for the donor community (e.g. Brodin 2000; see also Diamond 1995). It was believed that democratic states were more likely to generate socioeconomic development than authoritarian ones (Howell & Pearce 2001: 40). Accountability, rule of law, legitimacy, human rights, and transparency thus became guiding concepts. Civil society emerged as part of the democracy-building initiatives, as it was believed that civil society aid would promote good governance, foster gender equality and promote citizen participation, democracy and respect for human rights. It was also believed that civil society could orient the political culture in a more democratic direction and generate democratic attitudes and behavior (SOU 2001:96: 274-75; see also Howell & Pearce 2001: 4).

In recent years there has been increasing criticism of civil society assistance (see e.g. Ottaway 2000). The debate has revolved to a large extent around the issues related to efficiency and accountability (see e.g. Tvedt 1998; Edwards & Hulme 1996a). Several impact studies have also shown that civil society is not very successful when it comes to reaching the poorest, improving the economic situation of the poorest, and project sustainability (see Biekart 1999: 115).[14] But how has the external influence in terms of development aid affected local civil societies and their potential to strengthen democracy? Despite the difficulties involved in assessing development assistance, support for local civil societies has, in several cases, contributed to democratization by providing support for oppositional movements in their struggle against authoritarian regimes. As Kees Biekart argues, particularly in the early stages of transition, support for broad alliances in civil society is important, especially when political parties are weak or delegitimized (1999: 297). But foreign aid

could also hamper civil society's democracy-building potential. One potential consequence of development assistance is that it could reinforce existing structures that are not conducive to democracy. For example, funding to local civil societies may reinforce and preserve undemocratic structures within civil society (see e.g. Ottaway & Chung 1999; Biekart 1999: 235). If support for civil society is to strengthen democracy through developing a democratic culture based on participation in civil society organizations, the receiving organizations must be democratic and open to equal participation. If informal structures are not observed, financial support to local organizations may contribute to the continued existence of organizations with formal democratic structures that, in practice, are controlled by hierarchical leadership structures or patron-client relations.

Development aid could also produce and reinforce what we might refer to as "artificial civil societies". Not every civil society organization is genuinely anchored in society at large and among the grassroots, and there is a risk that donor efforts to strengthen civil society might result in support for professionalized development NGOs rather than grassroots organizations. Development NGOs that exist in the same context as the donors may develop a capacity to learn the "donor vocabulary" and present working agendas that very much resemble the policy objectives of the donor community (Van Rooy 1998b: 206; Robinson 1996: 212; Sampson 1996: 122-125; Ottaway & Carothers 2000: 301). Numerous organizations are controlled from above and tend to engage in activities that the donors are interested in rather than what the grassroots want. Accordingly, there is a risk that the donor community will give rise to and support organizations with agendas that have the same goals as the donor community. Financial support that is supposed to strengthen civil society may then actually create and maintain an artificial civil society that is only concerned with service-delivering (see e.g. Ottaway & Chung 1999; McMahon 2001; Lofredo 2000; Hudock 1999). Related to this is the emergence of aid-dependent civil societies (see e.g. Ottaway & Chung 1999; Hudock 1999). If the aid-receiving organization loses contact with the grassroots, it will probably also suffer the loss of potential domestic financial sources. Moreover, several development NGOs are expensive to administer; "[p]aradoxically, civil society is turning into something many

countries can afford only if outsiders step in" (Ottaway & Chung 1999: 109). Another problem with external support is the question of autonomy. Pressure may be very subtle, but "associations […] can only perform their democracy-building roles if they have autonomy in their financing, operations, and legal standings" (Diamond 1999: 250). External support may facilitate the emergence of civil societies in the Third World, but at the same time it may hamper the organizations from developing independently.

We have already touched upon the issue of civil society autonomy and the relations between civil society and the state. As mentioned before, the government may try to include civil society through different co-optive strategies (see Oxhorn 1995; Dryzek 1996). Inclusion may reduce the countervailing power of civil society and accordingly undermine its democracy-strengthening potential. Inclusive strategies may be facilitated by the donor community's demands for civil society participation. Civil society thus becomes co-opted by the governing elite in order to silence opposition and gain legitimacy for its policies. Here we can distinguish two kinds of state co-optation. One is when the government creates civil society organizations (often referred to as "QUANGOs", or Quasi-non-governmental organizations) in order to satisfy the donor community. Another kind of co-optation occurs when originally genuine organizations become included and lose their countervailing power and the oppositional force they once had. Thus, support to local civil societies that reduces their autonomy might, in the long run, undermine civil society's democracy-building potential.

Support to local civil societies could also affect the capacity of the state negatively (Whaites 2000: 131-132). It is not only civil society that must have a certain level of autonomy. Political institutions must also be autonomous, and the political power must be able to make decisions based upon a balance of the interests represented in society. New democracies are often confronted with demands from previously repressed or discriminated groups that may have far-reaching demands on the government after the democratization process (see e.g. White 1994: 386). Thus, autonomy is equally as important for the representative institutions of democracy as for civil society. This delicate balance could be altered if the

donor society emphasizes the importance of strong civil societies (see e.g. Harper 1996: 127). Financial support to oppositional forces could undermine or weaken political institutions and create irreconcilable interests that, in the long run, might be harmful to the capacity of the state (see Kasfir 1998b: 144-145; Whaites 2000: 131-132). If the institutional balance is altered in favor of civil society, it might undermine the capacity of the state in the long perspective. As Joel S. Migdal (1988) has shown, strong social organizations may undermine the state's capabilities. In new democracies with no prior, or only limited, experience of democracy, the state and civil society are often seen as irreconcilable elements. If the donor society constantly emphasizes civil society, this may be interpreted as civil society being the democratic element and thus the one that gains legitimacy, whereas the political institutions are looked upon with skepticism The situation is further complicated when civil society acts like "hyperactive confrontational civil societies". Diamond describes the phenomenon as follows:

> A hyperactive, confrontational, and relentlessly rent-seeking civil society can overwhelm a weak, penetrated state with the diversity and magnitude of its demands, saddling the state with unsustainable and inflationary fiscal obligations and leaving little in the way of a truly public sector that is concerned for the overall welfare of society (Diamond 1999: 251).

Needless to say, all the negative versions of civil society that have been described here could exist without external development assistance. However, these malevolent aspects could all be reinforced by development assistance to civil society. It seems that the literature on civil society and democratization has not paid sufficient attention to the external impact, positive or negative, on local civil societies and the implications it may have for the democratization process. Given the fact that many of the newly established democracies are aid recipients, and that many donors include support to civil society in their democracy-promoting strategies, the external dimension must be taken into consideration if we are to understand civil society's democracy-building potential. Development aid affects the nature of civil society and civil society's relations with the state and

with society at large. Unless proper attention is directed to the potentially injurious consequences of development aid and its impact on democracy, we will not be able to understand civil society in post-transition development.

A Concluding Remark Concerning the Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework outlined here is primarily concerned with how we can understand civil society's democratizing potential, particularly in post-transition societies. Since this conceptual framework will guide the empirical analysis in the following chapters, its most important features are summarized here. A democratic transition rarely results in a flawless democracy. On the contrary, democratic elections often coexist with clientelism, authoritarian enclaves such as reserved political domains, and corrupt political practices. Against this background, democratic development, here in terms of political institutionalization, improved regime performance and the development of legitimacy for the democratic regime are all needed. In the pre-transition context and during the transition to constitutional rule, civil society can be an important countervailing power that challenges authoritarian rule and calls for democratic reforms. Once democracy has been established, civil society can contribute to a democratic development in the post-transition setting by being an agenda setter, an educator, a counterpart and a source of new political alternatives.

Civil society's potentially democracy-building functions are, however, constrained by a number of factors. It is particularly important to consider the political context, both the prior non-democratic regime and the prevailing political setting. One aspect is the ruling elite's strategies towards civil society. Civil society cannot contribute to democratic development as an agenda setter or a counterpart if organizations are being co-opted by the government. Moreover, the nature of civil society organizations is also important; organizations that are uncivil and undemocratic are unlikely to contribute to a democratic development by being educators. Given that many newly established democracies are recipients of the donor community's civil society assistance as part of their democracy-promoting strategies, we must also consider how this affects civil society's democracy-building potential. External support to civil society organiza-

tions in an authoritarian context may strengthen civil society vis-à-vis the state and thus support civil society's struggle against the authoritarian regime. Development assistance directed to civil society organizations may encourage the creation of development NGOs that are disconnected from the grassroots at the expense of a healthy pluralism. It may also sustain non-democratic and professionalized organizations. Finally, it may alter the delicate institutional balance in society or facilitate co-optative attempts.

Civil society *per se* is not a sufficient requisite of democracy, but it could be an important actor in the process of strengthening democracy. Naturally there are other actors that could craft democracy, and focusing on civil society does not give a complete picture of the democratization problems.[15] However, focusing on civil society provides one rewarding approach to our understanding of democratic development in post-transition societies. The conceptual framework sketched here should be regarded as an analytical tool to examine civil society's democracy-building functions in newly established countries. The external dimension in terms of development aid to local civil societies indicates that it is chiefly concerned with Third World countries. However, a majority of all the new democracies are located in what we refer to as the "Third World"

With this conceptual framework in mind, let us now turn to the empirical part of the study. As we have argued for a structured-contingency approach to the study of democratization, the empirical analysis will begin with an attempt to analyze civil society in the pre-transition period, and to explore how civil society is shaped by the prior non-democratic regime.

Notes

1 Ruth Berins Collier & James Mahoney argue that collective actors, such as the labor movement, often played an important role in transitions as one of the major actors in the opposition (1999: 97-98).

2 See Staffan Lindberg (2002) for a similar argument. However, it should be noted that this was probably not O'Donnell & Schmitter's intention, as they do not take the epistemological stance that allows for such generalizations. By contrast, they pursue an idiographic perspective of transition studies (1986).

3 Las Madres de la Plaza de Mayo is an illustrative example of how an authoritarian regime can be discredited or delegitimized by a small group with limited resources. In the beginning of 1977, fourteen women, whose children had been kidnapped or killed by the regime's security forces, gathered at Plaza de Mayo in downtown Buenos Aires. Initially, Las Madres was not a formal organization—it was not until 1979 that a formal structure evolved. Each Tuesday they gathered, wearing white kerchiefs on which the names of their missing relatives and the date of their disappearances were embroidered. Then, they would stand, in silence, in a tight circle at the plaza. This informal group eventually developed into a strong voice. In 1978 they began to publish the bulletin of the Madres de Plaza de Mayo. More importantly, they became known internationally and developed relations with transnational networks, e.g. Amnesty International (See e.g. Navarro 2001: 241-258; Mattu 1994/1995). Las Madres was successful in discrediting the authoritarian regime in Argentina. The reason was that the regime did not perceive them as a threat, but referred to them as "las locas de la Plaza de Mayo". Ravi Mattu argues that this was important, because as the regime did not suppress the group, it gave them time to develop into a strong social movement. And, when the governing elite realized the mistake, it was too late—the group had become a strong organization with international contacts (see Mattu 1994/1995).

4 There could be several reasons why reforms are initiated, such as securing foreign aid and trade agreements, preventing revolutions and violent conflicts, staying in control of the transition etc. The purpose of reforms is not necessarily to install a democratic government.

5 One problem with Gill's analysis is his definition of civil society in which he includes political parties. In Chapter Four it was argued that political parties should not be regarded as part of civil society, because they seek to gain control of the formal political power.

6 (1) Checking, limiting and monitoring the power of the state; (2) supplementing the role of political parties in stimulating participation; (3) educating for democracy; (4) providing multiple channels for interest representation; (5) democratizing authoritarian enclaves at the local level; (6) generating a plurality of interests that could cut across divides in society and thereby mitigate polarization; (7) recruiting and training new political leaders; (8) creating organizations with explicit democracy-building goals (e.g. election monitoring); (9) disseminating information and empowering citizens so they can defend their interests; (10) forming coalitions with political actors (concertation); (11) developing techniques for conflict mediation and resolution; (12) strengthening the social foundations of democracy by community development work (e.g. Grameen bank); (13) enhancing "the accountability, responsiveness, inclusiveness, effectiveness, and hence legitimacy of the political system" (Diamond 1999: 240-250).

7 See Geoffery Pridham (2000) for an interesting discussion of historical memory, historical legacies and political learning.

8 Linz & Stepan argue that the traditional tripartite regime classification paradigm—the categorization of political regimes as either democratic, authoritarian, or totalitarian regimes—has become obsolete, as there is much more differentiation among the political regimes in the world today (1996: 38-40).

9 Linz & Stepan's language is at times confusing. It is somewhat unclear how the five arenas are related to the three dimensions of democratic consolidation as the only game in town as described in Chapter Three. This critique is also delivered by Schmitter (1997a: 170-172).

10 Concerning the other four arenas, Linz and Stepan argue that political society's autonomy is low to medium in authoritarian states, low in totalitarian, low to medium in post-totalitarian, and finally, low in sultanistic regimes. Turning to constitutionalism and the rule of law, it can be low to high in authoritarian regimes, low in totalitarian, medium in post-totalitarian and low in sultanistic regimes. The level of working bureaucracies and autonomy of the bureaucracies can be low to high in authoritarian regimes, low in totalitarian, low to medium in post-totalitarian and low in sultanistic regimes. Finally, the economic society (with a degree of market autonomy and pluralism in ownership) is medium to high in authoritarian regimes, low to medium in totalitarian (low in communist regimes, medium in fascist regimes), low to low–medium in post-totalitarian and low to medium in sultanistic regimes (Linz & Stepan 1996: 55-56).

11 Fredrik Uggla, who is concerned with "concertation" (defined as a broad policy coalition that involves both social and political actors) argues that the difficulty of social movements to adjust to a democratic context is "expected to arise when and if these movements participate in concertation as well" (2000: 25). If social movements play an important political role prior to the transition, and during the transition, they will be more reluctant to concertation, and vice versa, if social movements had "a less prominent political position prior to a democratisation, their involvement in social and economic pact-making after the transition would occur more easily" (Uggla 2000: 29). His study shows that the level of social conflict was low in Chile, whereas it was high in Uruguay. According to Uggla, the explanations, could be found, not in structural or organizational factors, but in political and historical factors, i.e., the respective experiences of the authoritarian rule and the role the labor movement had within the opposition. The Uruguayan organizations played a more political role than the Chilean ones (2000: 282-285).

12 This corresponds to what Huntington (1991) calls "snowballing".

13 See e.g. Hudock (1999); Van Rooy (ed.) (1998); Eade (ed.) (2000); Tvedt (1998); Edwards & Hulme (eds.) (1996a); (1996b).

14 See for example Sida, *Promoting Development by Proxy: An Evaluation of the Development Impact of Government Support to Swedish NGOs* (1995) and Danida, *The Danish NGO Impact Study. A Review of Danish NGO Activities in Developing Countries* (1999).

15 As Omar Encarnación shows, Spain, which is an interesting case because it is a success story in terms of transition had by the time of the transition a weak civil society. The reason for the successful transition was the pacts between the political parties that brought the major social actors together (Encarnación 2001: 73-79; see also Cohen 1999: 61 for a similar argument).

Chapter Six

Pre-Transition Honduras
From Liberal Reforms to Reformist Militaries

> Honduras is, indeed, a different country, with a unique history and development. No other Central American state has had the same dedication to agrarian reform, the same high level of peasant and union activity. No other Central American state has experienced such stability of traditional liberal and conservative parties. At the same time, no other nation has suffered from such corruption and dependency (Acker 1988: 12).

In Chapter Five it was argued that the prior regime leaves a legacy that cannot be ignored if we want to understand civil society's functions in the democratization process. It was also argued that the nature of civil society is formed under the authoritarian regime. Therefore, this chapter will go back in history in order to analyze the Honduran state-civil society relations in the pre-transition period. The focus is on the political context and, more specifically, on the character of the authoritarian regime and the governing elite's attitude towards civil society. Hence, the chapter has no ambitions of giving a complete overview of modern Honduran history. Rather, it constitutes an attempt to trace the degree of pluralism and civic traditions during the authoritarian rule, in order to increase our understanding of Honduran civil society and its democracy-building potential in today's post-transitional setting. Thus, those episodes or critical points of change in Honduran history that seem to be important for the argument are highlighted.

Pre-transition Honduras is here analyzed in a regional perspective. This chapter should not be viewed as a comparative study in a strict sense, but rather a case study complemented with intra-regional comparisons in order to better advance the argument. Honduras followed a different path than its neighbors Guatemala, El Salvador and Nicaragua. In contrast to the neighboring republics, Honduras escaped revolutionary violence and

civil wars. The most important sources of the relatively stable and peaceful development are the limited liberal reforms in the late 19th century that prevented an extremely polarized society, the absence of a coffee oligarchy and the emergence of a banana economy (i.e. the developments between 1870-1930). Another source of stability is the military reformism in the 1970s (Sieder 1996b: 10). Generally, the Honduran elite accepted pluralism and left some space for a civil society, but it also used different strategies to prevent radicalism and to control the civil society.

Coffee, Bananas and Liberal Reforms 1870-1930

In order to fully understand the development between 1870 and 1930, a few remarks concerning the colonial legacy are necessary. Colonial Honduras was geographically isolated, with a relatively small population, a poorly developed infrastructure and a scarcity of labor. Overall, the Honduran colonial experience was characterized by neglect from the Spanish Crown (Morris 1984: 1; Torres Rivas 1993: 9). Guatemala and Costa Rica can be said to represent the opposite poles, or extremes, of colonial experience in Central America. Guatemala was at the time the colonial center, whereas Costa Rica long remained an isolated region. Guatemala had a heterogeneous population, whereas Costa Rica's small population consisted essentially of *mestizos* and *creoles* (Torres-Rivas 1993: 9). Honduras, El Salvador and Nicaragua were situated somewhere in between these extremes.

The period after independence is best described as a period of anarchy with constant conflicts between Conservatives and Liberals (Torres Rivas 1993: 1-11).[1] Eventually, the Liberals came to power and implemented reforms throughout Central America. The Liberals wanted to establish a capitalist agro-export economy, based on free trade, property rights, free markets and modern civic codes, and saw the colonial restrictions and the Church as the main barriers to development (see e.g. Dunkerley 1988: 3-5; Morris 1984: 3-4). In addition to the liberal reforms, the Liberals implemented social reforms. The most visible effect was the decline of the *creole latifundistas*, and the increased access to land as the tithe was abolished. Thus, the incentives to cultivate coffee grew (see e.g. Torres Rivas 1993: 14-15).

The five Central American republics have different experiences of the liberal reforms. Guatemala experienced the most radical liberal reforms (Lapper 1985: 18-19; Torres Rivas 1993: 14). In comparison, the liberal reforms in Honduras were modest, and there was no real liberal revolution. As Rachel Sieder describes it, there was a series of administrative reforms rather than a radical transformation of the society (1996b: 112). The reforms included public education, civil codes, fiscal organization and suppression of the tithe, and had relatively little impact on the society at large (Acker 1988: 56; Dunkerley 1988: 37-38). A new constitution, promulgated in 1880, regulated economic affairs and separated the Church from the state (Morris 1984: 2). Thus, the liberal reforms in Honduras were limited, and consequently did not create the necessary conditions for a capitalist economy based on agro-export as they did in other parts of Central America, particularly in Guatemala and El Salvador (Torres Rivas 1993: 18).

Absence of a Coffee Oligarchy

At the end of the 19th century, coffee became an important export crop in Central America. However, for a number of reasons—poor soil, scarcity of labor, absence of infrastructure, and limited liberal reforms—Honduras lagged behind and never became an important coffee exporter (e.g. Lapper 1985: 18-19).[2] Thus, no major coffee oligarchy emerged that could consolidate its power as in Guatemala and El Salvador (see e.g. Lapper 1985: 18-19; Euraque 1996: 9). Political development in Honduras, therefore, did not follow such a "coffee path" as in the other countries. Rather, Honduran society was, in the beginning of the 20th century, still situated in a "pre-coffee condition" (Euraque 1996: 13). By the end of the 19th century, Honduras was described as being "so poor that it cannot even afford an oligarchy." There was a small merchant class in San Pedro Sula, and a few hundred landlords around the country, but the oligarchy was poor compared to those in the neighboring countries (Dunkerley 1988: 37-38). This relative poverty and the relatively weak elite never produced such an extremely polarized society as in the other countries, and this had implications for the future stability of Honduras (see e.g. Walker & Armony 2000: xviii).

By the end of the 19th century, Honduras therefore embarked on a different path than its neighbors El Salvador, Guatemala and, to a lesser extent, Nicaragua. By this time the polarization that later would result in revolutionary violence was consolidated in the region, with a small political and economic land-owning elite and a large landless marginalized mass. In Guatemala, an ethnic division reinforced this cleavage. Two countries that experienced a somewhat different development were Costa Rica and Honduras. As the population in Costa Rica was meager, a hacienda system with extensive use of labor was impossible, and therefore a small farmer society had emerged after independence. However, Costa Rica's *minifundistas* society disappeared to some extent when coffee became an important export crop. Still, it was a society mainly characterized by small and mid-sized farms because of the scarcity of labor (Torres Rivas 1993: 16-18). In conclusion, Honduras' development was quite different from that of Guatemala and El Salvador, who had far-reaching liberal reforms that laid the ground for an export economy and the emergence of a powerful coffee oligarchy.

The Banana Republic

> In Honduras, a mule is worth more than a congressman (Sam Zemurray, United Fruit Company president, quoted in Acker 1988: 57).

The absence of a powerful coffee oligarchy or any other national elite left Honduras open for foreign investments. As a result, foreign fruit companies became powerful actors in the 20th century. Liberal politicians argued for the need of capital investment for national development and modernization. American fruit companies could provide both capital and infrastructure. The Honduran state put fertile land and other natural resources at the foreign companies' disposal, and the companies did not have to invest much in the country (Laínez & Meza 1985: 36). The fruit companies needed railroads and maritime transportation, and negotiated with the state for infrastructural contracts. In return for every kilometer of railway that the companies built, they received land concessions. The direction of the railroads was an example of the enclave character of the

banana economy (see e.g. Torres Rivas 1993: 33-34).[3] The railroads were constructed to fit the needs of the banana industry and to run parallel to the Coast (Lapper 1985: 22-24).[4] When the most powerful of the banana companies—the United Fruit Company (UFCO)—moved its operations from the Trujillo area, they ripped up the track and moved it (Acker 1988: 66).

The entrance of the banana companies was a mixed blessing for Honduras. On the negative side of course is the fruit companies' interest in Honduran political affairs. The so-called Rolston letter, a letter written by the vice president at Cuyamel Fruit Company to the company lawyer, illustrated how the banana companies perceived their role in Honduras and how far they would go to defend their interests, using bribery and political patronage (Peckenham & Street 1985: 44).[5] The tax exemption granted to the fruit companies reflected the weakness of the local elite, which was unable to stand up against the powerful companies. The international transactions took place within the enclave economy, outside institutionalized channels. The banana companies did not, for example, have to go through Honduran customs. In the long run this undermined the state sovereignty (Torres Rivas 1993: 37). The banana economy was detached from the state, and this impeded national development (Torres Rivas 1993: 38). UFCO used existing local elites to build a network of local associates in patron-client relations. Government officials regularly received payments from UFCO's Tegucigalpa office (Boatman-Guillan 1985: 40-41). UFCO used economic power, public relations, and also direct contacts with local politicians to promote their interests (McCann 1976; Acker 1998: 66-67):

> These efforts extended from informal requests, personal appeals, and financial payments, to denial of loan requests, threats to reduce economic activities, and provision of financial support to opposition political candidates, as well as effective or tacit support for a politically ambitious general ready to begin an armed revolt (Boatman-Guillan 1985: 41).

UFCO was not the only company that was involved in Honduran politics. Cuyamel (formerly Vacarro Brothers), for example, was involved in Honduran political life. In contrast to UFCO, who supported the Nationalists,

Cuyamel supported the Liberals (Boatman-Guillan 1985: 40-43).[6] In 1929, UFCO bought Cuyamel and expanded its power (Boatman-Guillan 1985:38).

The banana economy was clearly a mixed blessing. Edelberto Torres Rivas argues that the banana enclave created political instability and prolonged the authoritarian rule. The state lost control over vital aspects of the economy, and this resulted in dependency that lasted until after World War II (Torres Rivas 1993: 40). In contrast, Darío A. Euraque (1996) argues that the fruit companies did not control Honduran politics. Rather, it was the local society on the North Coast that influenced national political development. Euraque describes the banana economy as a source of liberalism and reformism (1996). The banana production differed qualitatively from the coffee production through its recruitment of labor mainly via economic mechanisms. As it operated with a free work force that was paid a normal salary, the banana plantation had more of a capitalist character. The banana economy therefore brought a social and cultural change: at the banana plantations a new social group—agricultural workers—appeared (Torres Rivas 1993: 39). It was also at the banana plantations that the labor movement was born and the first strikes took place. The peasant or *campesino* movement also has its roots in the banana plantations on the North Coast (Laínez & Meza 1985: 37). A cross-class coalition with liberal capitalists and banana workers emerged on the North Coast (Euraque 1996). These new actors used the liberal newspaper *La Prensa* to spread their liberal and reformist opinions (Euraque 1996: 87-88). Moreover, commercial and industrial structures were developed by the banana economy, and the new towns of La Ceiba and San Pedro Sula became commercial centers. Euraque argues that the military reformism in the 1970s was profoundly inspired by this liberalism that originated from San Pedro Sula and other North Coast cities (1996).

Limited liberal reforms, absence of a coffee or any other national oligarchy, and the emergence of new social groups and cross-class coalitions in the banana enclaves prevented an extreme polarization in the country and abbreviated violent conflicts. This also laid the ground for the Honduran elite's attitude towards organized groups in society.

Civil-Military Rule 1932-1972

Except for the years 1957 to 1963, Honduras has been ruled by different non-democratic regimes. But, with the exception of a few periods, the repression never reached the same levels as it did in the neighboring countries. The modern political history of Honduras is best described as a complex alternation of reforms and repression, of civil and military rule, of elections and military coups, of strong popular organizations and of repression of peasant leaders.

Caudillo Politics

President Tiburcio Carías Andino left deep inscriptions in Honduran history, probably more because he governed Honduras for 16 years than because of his political accomplishments. Carías has been described as a "caudillo of the old school" (Morris 1984: 8).[7]

> *Caudillo* rulers have generally been pictured as practitioners of the hero cult, as ruthless, vain, and authoritarian, as passionate, paranoid (though uncultured) demagogues who take possession of the people and then denounce personal enemies as enemies of the country (Acker 1988: 70).

Backed by the National Party and the UFCO, Carías was elected president in 1932. During his presidency, Carías promoted the interests of the UFCO, which financed both his party and his government (Acker 1988: 74; Morris 1984: 8). Carías manipulated the elections and changed the constitution to prolong his mandate, and remained as president until 1949.[8] This manipulation of the constitution and elections introduced what is called *continuismo*—and let Carías hold on to power (Stokes 1950: 256-262).[9]

The Carías epoch is best described as a harsh dictatorship. Opponents were put in prison, the mass media was restricted to the National Party's paper, *La Epoca*, and repression was vicious. Civil and political rights were suppressed. Members of the Liberal Party were exiled in other Central American countries, Mexico and the United States (Acker 1988: 74; Morris 1984: 9). According to Nancy Peckenham & Annie Street the

trade union movement, except for some underground activities, almost ceased to exist (1985: 90). However, in the 1940s protests against the authoritarian regimes surfaced in the region at large. Popular protests, strikes and widespread social unrest forced General Maximilio Hernández in El Salvador and General Jorge Ubico in Guatemala to leave office in 1944 (Yashar 1997: 86-93). Eventually the protests reached Honduras, and demonstrations in Tegucigalpa and San Pedro Sula claimed the lives of several protesters. After US pressure, Carías finally left office, and one of his former ministers—Juan Manuel Gálvez Durón—was installed after the 1948 elections, an election that the Liberals had boycotted (Morris 1984: 9).

Gálvez broke with the "cariato style" of governing. He was more tolerant than Carías and had a different leadership style. During his time in office, exiles returned to Honduras, political prisoners were released and the Liberal Party could reorganize under the leadership of Dr. José Ramón Villeda Morales (Morris 1984: 10). Greater freedom of the press was allowed and the political climate in general became less tense (Dunkerley 1988: 527; Morris 1984: 10). The Gálvez administration was clearly different from the backwardness of the Carías era (Morris & Ropp 1977: 43). However, the 1950s turned out to be a turbulent decade marked by political chaos and by the emergence of a strong labor movement and the 1954 strike that brought Honduras to a standstill.

The 1954 Strike and the Emergence of the Labor Movement

It was at the banana plantations that the labor movement and strikes first appeared.[10] In May 1954, 25,000 workers at Tela Railroad Company (part of UFCO) in Puerto Cortés went on strike for higher wages, better working conditions and for the right to organize and bargain collectively (MacCameron 1983: 21-62; Morris 1984: 10-11). The strike spread to the plantations in Lima and Tela, and eventually to the plantations of Standard Fruit and to the processing industries (Morris 1984: 10-11; see also Dunkerley 1988: 529). Overall, 50,000 workers went on strike. Peasants, students and teachers demonstrated their solidarity with the workers (Acker 1988: 83-84; MacCameron 1983: 36). In July, the government negotiated a settlement. The concessions that the government made

demonstrated that Gálvez had a different leadership style than had his predecessor Carías. Rather than brutally putting an end to the protests, Gálvez made concessions that discouraged radicalism (Morris 1984: 11; Dunkerley 1988: 530).

The strike of 1954 had a lasting impact on Honduran society (Euraque 1996: xxii). Trade unions were legalized—the United Fruit Workers' Union (SITRATERCO) and Standard Fruit's SITRAFRUCO became officially recognized in 1955—and the first labor code was implemented in 1959 (Acker 1988: 84; Dunkerley 1988: 530-531). In the late 1950s, Honduras had the largest organized labor force in the region (Acker 1988: 85). In 1964, the Inter-American Regional Organization of Workers (ORIT) sponsored the creation of the Confederación de Trabajadores de Honduras (CTH), in which the most powerful banana unions were included. ORIT-affiliated unions received generous US financial support. ORIT's hegemony was, however, challenged in the late 1950s and 1960s as independent peasant movements gained strength (Sieder 1996b: 115). In the 1960s, land had become a scarce resource, and landlessness became a major problem, due to population growth and the growth of commercial agriculture (Ruhl 1984: 36-39).[11] As a result, conflicts over land increased. These developments challenged ORIT's ideological control (Sieder 1996b: 115-116).). In 1970, Christian Democrats formed Confederación General de Trabajadores. CGT consisted mainly of workers in the Tegucigalpa area. All unions were however subject to internal divisions (Acker 1988: 85-88). Moreover, as Sieder describes, *caudillismo* was rampant within trade unions and peasants' movements (1996b: 115).

The years following the 1954 strike were characterized by chaos. Elections were held in late 1954. Due to the split among the Nationalists, the Liberals won with 48 percent of the votes.[12] However, as only an absolute majority could win the presidency, the Congress was to elect the president. The Nationalists that still controlled the whole state apparatus united temporarily to prevent Villeda Morales from taking control. In the midst of this constitutional crisis, Vice President Julio Lozano assumed all powers, declared himself chief of state and created a Council of State that would advise the president (Dunkerley 1988: 528; Morris 1984: 11; Euraque 1996: 71). Overall, Lozano's government was more repressive

than the government of Gálvez. (Morris 1984: 11-12). For example, Lozano issued the Decree 206, Ley del Defensa del Régimen Democrático, which prohibited communist organizations and parties.[13] The Communist Party of Honduras (PCH) had been reorganized in 1954, but was, according to James Dunkerley, still very weak and had limited activities, and was therefore not really affected by the decree. By contrast, the Liberals that had supported the strike and represented the North Coast reformism were affected by this decree as Lozano accused them of being communists (Dunkerley 1988: 532). As a result, many Liberals were forced into exile.

New elections were held in October 1956.[14] Lozano won 90 percent of the votes (Morris 1984: 11). Many Liberals were still in exile and many Nationalists abstained from voting. Overall, it was a fraudulent election. However, the military intervened and assumed power. A military junta headed by General Roque J. Rodríguez promised a return to constitutional rule. Political prisoners were released and political amnesty was granted to the exiles who returned to Honduras (Morris 1984: 11-12; Dunkerley 1988: 533). The October coup of 1956 marked the entrance of the military into politics and was thus the beginning of a military political identity. Before leaving office, the military assured institutional autonomy through new laws that stated that the president could not choose or remove the chief of the armed forces. The 1956 coup thus resulted in a loss of civilian authority over the military (Ruhl 1996. 36). In July 1957, Rodríguez was accused of "playing politics" and was therefore forced to leave the junta, and Minister of Defense General Oswaldo López Arellano became a new member of the junta (Dunkerley 1988: 534).

The 1950s is a crucial period for our understanding of civil society. It was then the labor movement, which has been described as the strongest in the entire region, emerged. This period also marks the entrance of the military into the political sphere.

The Liberal Interlude

The military junta scheduled elections to a Constituent Assembly for September 1957. The National Party was still split between *carístas* (supporters of Carías) and *reformistas* (followers of the more progressive fraction

Movimiento Nacional Reformista, MNR). Against this background, the Liberal Party and Villeda Morales won the elections and assumed control in the Congress. In the indirect presidential elections, Villeda Morales was elected president (Morris 1984: 35-37). The liberal government of 1957 bears resemblance to the liberal government of 1876, with an ambitious agenda oriented towards modernization reforms (Morris 1984: 37; Dunkerley 1988: 536). Villeda Morales was exactly what Washington and Kennedy's Alliance for Progress wanted—he was interested in social reforms and welfare but he was not radical (Dunkerley 1988: 536). During this period, important steps to implement social reforms were taken. A law on social security was enacted and the Honduran Institute for Social Security (IHSS) was established. Villeda Morales also created the Instituto Nacional Agrario (INA) and, in 1962 an agrarian reform was enacted. INA was supposed to retrieve the *ejido* land (communal land) and distribute it among the landless and had the right to expropriate idle land. Consequently, landlords and fruit companies had to improve production or the land would be expropriated (Morris 1984: 37-38; Dunkerley 1988: 536-537).

The agrarian reform was not as radical as the one President Jacobo Arbenz Guzmán in Guatemala tried to implement a couple of years earlier (e.g. Dunkerley 1988: 537).[15] Yet, the UFCO and other major landowners strongly opposed the reforms. Also, neighboring dictators like Somoza, as well as parts of the military, were against the reforms (Morris 1984: 38). The military constituted a threat to Villeda Morales. In 1959 the National Police were involved in a series of revolts. The National Police was serving under the Ministry of Defense, and Minister López Arellano was in control of all security forces. Villeda Morales dissolved the National Police and organized a Civil Guard that served under the Ministry of Government and Justice. Of course, the military reacted negatively and there were constant clashes between the Civil Guard and the military (see Morris 1984: 38-39; Dunkerley 1988: 539).

The Peasant Movement

In the 1960s, peasant organizations emerged stimulated by the unionized banana workers, the unequal land distribution and the scarcity of land due

to the increasing commercial agriculture (Posas 1980: 48). The first significant peasant movements in Honduras emerged at the banana plantations on the North Coast, where ex-workers had become *campesinos* and rented the fruit companies' idle land. However, when the fruit companies reoriented their activities to cattle breeding, the peasants were evicted. The peasant organization Federación Nacional de Campesinos de Honduras (FENACH) was founded in 1962 with the aim of recovering the land that was in the hands of the fruit companies. The founders were members of the Communist Party, and FENACH used militant methods (Kincaid 1985: 136-137). Villeda Morales' government did not want FENACH to organize the redistribution of land, and therefore a parallel peasant organization—Asociación de Campesinos de Honduras (ANACH)—was created in 1962, assisted by the US through ORIT (Dunkerley 1998: 537-538; Kincaid 1985: 136-137). ANACH was clearly favored with institutional and material support and, consequently, many *campesinos* left FENACH for this organization (Kincaid 1985: 136-137). Another peasant movement was that of the Catholic Church which worked with community development programs in the villages. Initially, it was a more conservative movement with Catholic values. However, in 1969 this movement was transformed into the more radical Unión Nacional de Campesinos (UNC) that used land incursions (*tomas*) as their strategy and became a challenge to ANACH (Kincaid 1985: 139-145; see also Sieder 1996b: 116). The radicalization of the peasant organization associated with the Catholic Church can be understood in the light of the change in the Catholic Church and its focus on consciousness-raising education (cf. Lehmann 1990). INA created another national peasant organization, Federación de Cooperativas de la Reforma Agraria de Honduras (FECORAH), through which the agrarian reform was supposed to be channeled. However, in 1968 FECORAH disengaged itself from INA (Morris & Ropp 1977: 35-36). Ruhl argues that the Honduran peasant organizations were the strongest in Central America, because they had the right to organize legally and because they were supported by the banana workers' unions and by the Catholic Church (Ruhl 1984: 51).

For our purpose it is interesting to note that in order to avoid confrontation with the radical peasant organization FENACH, the government

created ANACH, which was clearly favored in terms of material and institutional support. Thus, the government contributed to a split within the peasant movement.

The Return of the Military

In this context of escalating conflicts between the popular sectors and the elite, the October elections of 1963 were approaching. How the election would have turned out remains uncertain, as General López Arellano seized all powers in a military coup, ten days before the election.[16] Hundreds were injured, especially among the civil guard (Morris 1984: 39; Dunkerley 1988: 539). López Arellano ruled Honduras 1963-1971 together with Ricardo Zuñiga Agustinus from the National Party, who served as secretary of the presidency. During this epoch, the military autonomy was consolidated. 1963 marked the beginning of an almost 18-year-long period of uncontested military rule, with one exception in 1971-1972 (Ruhl 1996: 36).

Mario Posas describes López Arellano's regime as "extremely corrupt, repressive, and unpopular" (1980: 50). Initially López Arellano repressed the peasant groups, especially FENACH (Kincaid 1985: 138). Land incursions were increasing in the 1960s. It was especially FENACH, with support from the Communist Party that was involved in the land incursions in the department of Yoro. López Arellano sent his troops to kill FENACH's leader Lorenzo Zelaya (known as the Massacre of El Jute 30 April 1965) (Dunkerley 1988: 542). Peasant unrest was increasing with land occupations, and when ANACH threatened with a hunger march to Tegucigalpa in 1967, López Arellano installed the reform-minded Rigoberto Sandoval Corea as the director of INA (Dunkerley 1988: 547; Kincaid 1985: 139).

López Arellano also came into conflict with both the capitalists and labor unions on the North Coast. This alliance was in his view too liberal and reformist (Euraque 1996: 121-135). He promised to guarantee labor legislation and to implement agrarian reforms, but in practice they were never implemented. With support from the goon squad Mancha Brava he replaced the leadership at SITRAFRUCO and reorganized it into an

ORIT-AIFLD led union, in order to get control over the labor movement (Dunkerley 1988: 542). Strikes on the North Coast in 1968 were met with a thirty-day-long state of siege, with control of the media and business, and with arrested labor leaders (Morris 1984: 40; Dunkerley 1988: 543). Labor organizations and the private sector on the North Coast strongly opposed López Arellano's regime. North Coast labor and business wanted an end to the corruption and participation of all socioeconomic groups in the policy-making process, and progressive Liberals protested against the regime through the Cortés Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCIC) (Dunkerley 1988: 542; Euraque 1996: 121-135). López Arellano found himself opposed by various social groups (Morris 1984: 41). But, he was pragmatic, and by 1967 he began to distribute land. He also managed to find a scapegoat—the Salvadoran refugees and immigrants who had migrated to Honduras because of shortage of land in densely populated El Salvador (Ruhl 2000: 50; Lapper 1985: 60-61).

The Soccer War

The so-called soccer war in July 1969, which was triggered by a soccer game, lasted for about 100 hours after the Salvadoran invasion. Peasant groups, trade unions and the North Coast business sector supported the military regime patriotically (Ruhl 2000: 50; Sieder 1996b: 118). For example, CTH organized a pro-government demonstration, and both Liberals and the urban bourgeoisie joined the anti-Salvadoran campaign (Dunkerley 1988: 550).

The reason for the Salvadoran invasion was tensions due to uneven demographic and economic development. El Salvador was much more developed, but also more densely populated. Land was scarce, and consequently poor people without land migrated to Honduras where land was more abundant. When land eventually became scarce in Honduras as well, the Salvadorans were identified as scapegoats. At the time, there was also an anti-Salvadoran sentiment because of the Salvadoran goods that were flooding into the Honduran market as a result of cooperation within the Central American Common Market (CACM). The cooperation within the CACM affected rural Honduras negatively, when cheap,

manufactured goods from El Salvador flowed into the country. Honduras was importing far more than it exported (e.g. Dunkerley 1988: 545-546). In the mid-1960s Honduras' balance of payments was negatively affected by the trade within the region. El Salvador, however, benefited more than any other state from the trade agreements (Woodward 1999: 293-299). The anti-Salvadoran sentiments were convenient for López Arellano who was being attacked from the political left as well as the political right and needed a scapegoat. Salvadoran settlers in Yoro, Santa Barbara, Copán and Choluteca were harassed by la Mancha Brava (Dunkerley 1988: 548). Finally, Salvadoran settlers were forced to leave Honduras. El Salvador sealed its border and invaded Honduras to defend their countrymen. Eventually, when the OAS threatened an economic boycott, El Salvador withdrew from Honduras with at least a psychological victory (Lapper 1985: 61-61; Volk 1985: 148-150).

The defeat in the soccer war revealed an inefficient, backward and corrupt military organization. This paved the way for reform in Honduras. The poor performance of the military during the war opened up for a changed balance of power, and the young officers who were inspired by the Peruvian model of development became more influential (Morris 1984: 41; see also Dunkerley 1988: 550; Volk 1985: 150-151). In 1970 López Arellano broke with the National Party and formed a progressive alliance with peasants, unions and business (Ruhl 2000: 50; Sieder 1996b: 118). The war also provided an opportunity to withdraw from CACM. In addition, the war had concrete effects on the process of agrarian reforms. The expulsion of Salvadoran immigrants made it possible for INA to distribute more land to the landless peasantry (Kincaid 1985: 140).

The Pacto Government

In September 1971 hurricane Fifi hit the North Coast, and left Honduras with immense damage. At a national conference, *Fuerzas Vivas*, interest groups from business, labor and rural sectors demanded political reforms (Morris & Ropp 1977: 44). The labor union CTH wanted the Liberal Party and the National Party to put their partisan instincts aside and form a coalition or a political pact like the one in Colombia (Dunkerley 1988:

550). The Colombian pact, or the National Front, which was approved in a plebiscite in 1957 stated that the two parties—the Liberals and the Conservatives—alternated in the presidency (four terms of four years each). In addition, the two parties shared equally all seats in the Congress and in the Senate. The Colombian pact lasted for 16 years (see e.g. Peeler 1992: 95). The proposal of a pact was also backed by the Liberals and the student movement, which was becoming an important sociopolitical force. López Arellano rejected the proposal, but the Liberals and Nationalists agreed, perhaps because they wanted to put an end to López Arellano's *continuista* ambitions (Dunkerley 1988: 550-551). The two parties signed an agreement that stated that they would have equal representation in the Congress and that an elected president would choose a technocratic government (Morris 1984: 42-43). The pacto government was supposed to implement social and economic reforms (Morris & Ropp 1977: 45). In the election of 1971, the nationalist candidate—Dr. Ramón Cruz—won. And, consequently, the National Party came to dominate the pact. However, neither the Liberals nor the Nationalists were happy with the *pactito*. The coalition was accused of doing nothing, and Cruz was considered inept (Morris 1984: 43; Morris & Ropp 1977: 45). But there were other persons who were prepared to once again assume powers. In a speech, López Arellano addressed the economic stagnation and social crisis and turned to the popular sectors:

> the unionized workers of our country are the forgers and creators of our collective wealth; unions have become the school of experience… The Armed Forces are composed of workers and peasants…, the Armed Forces are not enemies of the workers and the peasant (López Arellano, quoted in Morris 1984: 44).

On the morning of December 4, 1972, General López Arellano assumed power in a coup and declared himself chief of state (Dunkerley 1988: 552).

The Reformist 1970s

López Arellano's civilian power base in 1972 consisted of an informal alliance between the armed forces, the ORIT-dominated organized labor

movement (CTH), the pro-government peasant organization ANACH and the progressive private sector. It was a populist government that promoted economic and social reforms (Morris 1984: 45; Sieder 1996b: 116; Morris & Ropp 1977: 41).[17]

> The Honduran variant of populism in the 1970s built on traditions of *caudillismo*, clientelism, and patronage politics, which […] were intrinsic to the development of the modern Honduran state (Sieder 1996b: 119).

López Arellano, according to Sieder, was aware of the peasant discontent and knew that he had to do something to turn it into popular support. The reformist military used inclusion as a strategy, and wanted to create a revolution from above, as had been done in Peru 1968-75, and the idea of national security came to include socioeconomic development (Sieder 1996b: 119-120).[18] The reformist militaries did not create a corporative system even though there were certain corporate tendencies, such as the inclusion of certain interest groups in governmental commissions. However, James A. Morris & Steve C. Ropp question whether these commissions played any meaningful role in policy making, because representation of interest groups seemed to be more limited in practice (1977: 42-49).

Agrarian Reforms

Land reforms accelerated after López Arellano had assumed power (Ruhl 1984: 52). The Decree Law 8, issued in 1971, gave the peasants temporary access to national and *ejido* land controlled by the INA. It also required that private owners cultivated or rented their idle land. Decree Law 8 was a temporary solution and unlikely to radically transform the land tenancy structure of Honduras, and hence not what the peasant organizations wanted (Schultz & Sundloff-Schultz 1994: 40-41; Morris 1984: 46; Dunkerley 1988: 453-454). In January 1974, a fifteen-year Plan Nacional de Desarollo (PND) was announced, which proclaimed an enlarged role for the state, rational exploitation of resources, production of basic consumer goods for the domestic market, agrarian redistribution and nationalization of the forestry resources (Morris 1984: 46; Dunkerley

1988: 453-454; Sieder 1996b: 120-121). In January 1975, Decree Law 8 was replaced by a more comprehensive land reform law (Decree Law 170) that aimed at improving the efficiency in the agricultural sector and to put an end to the land incursions (Schultz & Sundloff-Schultz 1994: 40-41).

The effects of the agrarian reforms have been contested. According to James A. Morris, Decree Law 170 was not supposed to seriously alter the landownership (1984: 46). The agrarian reforms benefited 12 percent of the landless between 1962-1980 (Ruhl 1984: 53). Mark J. Ruhl argues that no other agrarian reform in Central America before 1979 distributed so much land to the landless (1984: 53). The agrarian reforms had political importance:

> The reforms served as an important safety valve, diffusing campesino unrest and discouraging independent peasant mobilizations (Schultz & Sundloff-Schultz 1994: 41).

One important consequence of the military-led agrarian reform was the co-optation of the peasant movement and the resulting diminishing discontent. Peasants became more interested in receiving credit and technical assistance than in fighting for those who still did not own land. Donald E. Schultz & Deborah Sundloff-Schultz also emphasize the symbolic value of the agrarian reform—the military became somebody whom the poor peasants could rely on, and who returned the "stolen land" to them (1994: 41). In a comparative perspective, this sent a message of Honduras as being much more progressive than the neighboring countries (Schultz & Sundloff-Schultz 1994: 41; Ruhl 1984: 55). The popular sectors were, however, split over the reforms. ANACH supported the agrarian reform but UNC was more critical (Sieder 1996b: 121-122).

The year 1975 was turbulent, and López Arellano was attacked on the one hand by impatient reformists and on the other hand by worried conservatives (Morris 1984: 47). President Somoza in Nicaragua saw the land reforms in Honduras as a communist project. The Liberal and the National Parties were also worried over the military's leftist tendencies (Morris 1984: 47). Opposition also grew within the organization for private business Consejo Hondureño de la Empresa Privada (COHEP)

(Sieder 1996b: 121-122). Hence López Arellano was again caught between various forces. But this time it was the corruption within the military government that eventually led to its fall.

Bananagate and a Return to Conservative Military Rule

The bribery scandal with United Brands (former UFCO), known as "bananagate", triggered the fall of López Arellano's regime. A cartel of banana exporting countries had agreed to raise the tax to one dollar on each forty-pound box of bananas. The banana companies reacted negatively, and Eli Black, chairman of United Brands, paid US$ 1.25 million to a Honduran government official for lowering the export tax in August 1974 (McCann 1976: 217; Dunkerley 1988: 556-557; Acker 1988: 67). When the affair was investigated, López Arellano refused to let his Swiss accounts be examined. López Arellano was forced to resign by the Superior Council of the Armed Forces (CONSUFFAA), and was replaced by General Juan Alberto Melgar Castro who became the new president in April 1975 (Dunkerley 1988: 556-557). The personalism that had characterized López Arellano's regime was now replaced with a more collegial style of military governance (Morris 1984: 48).

Melgar Castro slowed down the implementation of the agrarian reform, and peasant groups started to protest (Sieder 1996b: 124). In May 1975, the radical peasant movement UNC staged a mass occupation in protest. About 10,000 peasants occupied over 100 haciendas in the department of Olancho, an occupation that ended in a massacre (the massacre of Juticalpa 25 June 1975). Four military officers and two ranchers were charged with the killings. UNC scared the Church and the Christian Democrats, who later withdrew their support from the radicalized UNC (Dunkerley 1988: 557; Sieder 1996b: 123). The military higher council CONSUFFAA was split between those who wanted to follow a Peruvian model with extended radicalism and popular participation, and those who wanted to consolidate existing structures (Dunkerley 1988: 558). After the Juticalpa massacre, UNC, ANACH and FECORAH formed an alliance to force Melgar Castro to continue with the agrarian reform (Kincaid 1985: 141). However, the policies of the government became less

progressive and stagnated in the late 1970s. This disrupted the peasant movement, and the peasant alliance disintegrated partly as a consequence of government favoritism (Kincaid 1985: 143). In 1978 Melgar Castro's government was discredited due to allegations concerning its involvement in peasant massacres and in drug trafficking and corruption. CONSUFFAA replaced him with a military triumvirate led by General Policarpo Paz García, who had been head of the armed forces in Melgar Castro's regime. This constituted an end to popular reforms and a return to conservative social and economic policies (Morris 1984: 50-51). Under the leadership of Melgar Castro and Paz García, the military moved closer to the Nationalist Party (Ruhl 2000: 51).

Reform and Repression

Up to the late 1970s, Honduras had—since its independence from Spain—been governed by different authoritarian (civil or military) regimes, with the exception of the liberal interlude 1957-1963. However, from a regional perspective, the Honduran experience is quite different from those of its neighbors. Honduras' experience actually more resembles that of Costa Rica than of Guatemala, El Salvador, and Nicaragua. With Juan J. Linz & Alfred Stepan's (1996) typology of political regimes, Honduras would fit well into the authoritarian regime type. When we try to classify regime types, the time factor clearly implies a problem. Evidently, it is difficult to classify a case that stretches over such a long period of time into one regime-type category. There are, naturally, differences between the various governments. However, in spite of some changes in ideology and degree of pluralism accepted by the non-democratic regime, it seems reasonable to argue that there were no radical changes in governing style during Honduras' non-democratic period.

Pluralism

Moderate levels of economic and social pluralism were accepted during the authoritarian period, even though there have been differences between the governments. Carías, for example, definitely accepted less pluralism

than did his successor Gálvez. During the "cariato", liberal politicians were forced into exile, the mass media were constrained, political dissidents were jailed and the emerging labor movement was forced to work clandestinely (see e.g. Morris 1984: 9; Acker 1988: 74). But generally, economic and social pluralism were accepted by the non-democratic regimes. A comparison with the other countries in Central America illustrates that Honduras, even though it was not democratic like Costa Rica, had a ruling elite that was more tolerant. Since the late 1950s, trade unions, peasant movements and later student movements and professional organizations have been accepted. Thomas P. Anderson, for example, describes the independent national university (UNAH) as an important source of pluralism, and claims that it is perhaps the freest national university in the region, outside of Costa Rica (1988: 129). Political pluralism has, however, been more limited. The Honduran Communist Party, for example, was banned in the 1950s and Liberals, accused of being communists, were forced into exile. Hence, some regimes were definitely less tolerant than others, but social and economic pluralism was generally accepted.

The Honduran governing elite was less brutal than its counterparts in Guatemala, El Salvador or Nicaragua. In Guatemala, death squads were engaged in a slaughter and genocide of the civilian population, particularly the Indian population that was considered as subversive. Counterinsurgent security forces carried out violence without legal constraints, and civilians became military targets in the counterinsurgency war. The so-called scorched-earth campaign (1981-1983) aimed at depopulating the highland areas. Over 440 villages were entirely destroyed, 100,000 civilians were killed or "disappeared" and over one million persons were displaced (Jonas 1991: 146-149; see also Smith 1990). In El Salvador, General Maximiliano Hernández Martínez massacred between 10,000 and 30,000 peasants in 1932. In the early 1970s, popular movements became targets of heavy repression. It was often the peasantry associated with certain popular movements that were the targets of the repression and, accordingly, killed or "disappeared". But the violence of security forces and terrorist organizations was not restricted to peasants; many priests and nuns were also killed (Anderson 1988: 74-83). In

Nicaragua, during the Somoza dictatorship, the infamous Guardia Civil was engaged in grave repression of the population. There were attacks on remote villages where Guardia Civil raped, plundered and killed (see e.g. Anderson 1988: 182).[19] In this regional comparison, the Honduran governing elite stands out as less brutal, even though the abuses committed by the military regimes should not be disregarded. There has been serious repression against peasants and peasant leaders. Clearly, there have been cases of disappearances, killings, and torture committed by the security forces, but the repression has not been as brutal as in Guatemala or El Salvador.

Leadership, Ideology and Mobilization

The leadership style during Honduras' non-democratic period could not be described as personalistic and arbitrary without undefined limits or rational-legal constraints, as in totalitarian or sultanistic regimes (cf. Linz & Stepan 1996: 44). Rather, in the leadership dimension it seems as if Honduras should be classified as an authoritarian regime. Leadership was defined within formal, quite predictable norms. Again, there have of course been exceptions; Carías was a traditional caudillo who managed to put legal constraints aside, and consolidate all power to himself. In addition, he was *continuismo* personified, and managed to hold on to the presidential mandate for 16 years. There have also been leaders who have been fairly charismatic, like Gálvez—the "shirt-sleeve president"—who traveled around Honduras on horseback (Morris 1984: 10). López Arellano also ruled in a personalistic way in the early 1970s. But, by and large, the leadership has been quite formal and predictable, and the leaders have been technocratic rather than charismatic.

In Honduras, both civilian and military authoritarian governments have lacked a guiding ideology. The exception is the reformist militaries in the early 1970s. The military government of 1972-1975 had a character of a populist government that emphasized economic and social reforms. These young officers were inspired by the Peruvian development model, and wanted to develop and modernize the country. But, most authoritarian governments in Honduran modern history are best characterized as technocratic. A final dimension of the prior regime type concerns the level

of mobilization, which refers to attempts by the regime to mobilize the population in regime-created organizations or activities. There are no signs of such a mobilization in Honduras. In order to mitigate radicalism of workers' and peasants' organizations, the governing elite set up parallel organizations that were more conservative, and pro-government. But, apart from this attempt to split the popular movement, there were no signs of mobilization of the population.

Certainly, empirical cases never fit perfectly into our theoretically constructed boxes. A time span of about fifty years inevitably comprises some differences in the nature of non-democratic regimes. However, these are differences in degree rather than in type, and Honduras seems to be a relatively clear case of an authoritarian type of regime.

Regime Performance and Duration

Honduras' long experience of authoritarian rule could imply difficulties for civil society, given that the population has no experience of participation or democratic norms or values (cf. Gunther et al. 1995: 400). However, most of the time, people have been able to organize themselves. Thus, the duration of authoritarian rule should be considered in relation to the level of pluralism accepted. A civil society did emerge during the authoritarian period in Honduras. However, one could question how the lack of experience of democratic values affected the level of democracy within the organizations. As Sieder has pointed out, both labor unions and peasant movements had a strong element of caudillismo (1996b: 115).

The performance of the authoritarian regime is important for the broader prospects of democratic development, but it can also have a direct bearing on civil society. Following Guillermo O'Donnell's (1992) argument of the paradox of success, one could imagine that if the broader middle class, for example, has benefited from the economic performance of the regime, it would be less inclined to join dissident organizations. None of the authoritarian or military governments in Honduras' pre-democratic history performed particularly well. The soccer war revealed the weakness of the military structure. If the OAS had not intervened, Honduras would probably have lost the war. Economically, Honduras

remained one of the poorest countries in the region. Initially, there was some satisfaction with the agrarian reforms, but when the implementation slowed down, people lost faith in the government. Thus, the authoritarian regimes did not perform particularly well. This can have attributed to a widespread discontent that was articulated by civil society organizations such as the peasant movement, and at a later stage, human rights organizations. The authoritarian regime in Honduras did not leave any memories of satisfaction with the population. But it did not leave memories of harsh repression either.

To sum up, the non-democratic regime in Honduras is best described as an authoritarian regime that accepted some form of pluralism. The Honduran elite has mixed reform with repression, sometimes referred to as the *estilo hondureño* (Schultz 1992: 7):

> [The Honduran political system] might be likened to a homeostatic mechanism, which has provided periodic escape valves to siphon off potentially dangerous discontent; thus, the cyclical pattern of Honduran politics, with periods of reform alternating with periods of repression and sociopolitical stagnation (Schultz 1992: 2).

Civil Society in Pre-Transition Honduras

The relative restraint of the Honduran elite, in a regional perspective, and the alternation between reform and repression, is a clear illustration of the Honduran political elite's relation to the society at large. The setting was propitious for the development of a civil society. The banana plantations on the North Coast were fertile soil for an emerging labor movement, and inspired by the unionization of the banana workers, a peasant movement did indeed appear. The Honduran elite did not assault the emerging civil society but demonstrated a willingness to let workers and peasants engage in unions in ways that were unthinkable in El Salvador, Guatemala or Nicaragua under Somoza. Compared to the neighboring countries, the Honduran elite was small and weak due to the absence of a national coffee oligarchy. The weakness of the elite could be interpreted as one reason why they preferred accommodation to conflict (Schultz & Sundloff-Schultz 1994: 318).

The relation between the state and the popular sectors in the pre-transition period is characterized by limited repression and co-optation.

For example, by creating pro-government peasant organizations that were favored compared to the more radical organizations, the regime managed to co-opt and split the peasant movement.[20] Moreover, the agrarian reforms did buy off protests and mobilization declined, even though they did not change the general structures in the agrarian sectors. Honduras had, in the 1950s, the strongest labor unions in the region. But the willingness to let the poor sectors organize themselves and participate was part of a strategy to promote a "trade union mentality" that controlled the working class and made it abstain from more revolutionary activities (Schultz & Sundloff-Schultz 1994: 317). Unions and peasant movements became mechanisms for co-opting and controlling the poor sectors.

By orienting the discontent into trade union activity, and by implementing agrarian reforms, the discontent was mitigated and more radical types of activity were avoided. Schultz argues that the trade unions actually were conservative institutions, or as he writes, "bureaucratic bastions of privilege for a labor elite that had a vested interest in the status quo" (Schultz 1992: 3-4). According to Sieder, the inclusionary policy toward organized labor between 1972 and 1975 turned out to be destructive for the labor movement (1996b: 125).

In Honduras, the social conflict was mediated through reformism. Protests were treated with reform, and thus the elite avoided a significant change (Sieder 1996b: 128). In a period when the neighboring countries were confronted with escalating social unrest and revolutions, Honduras remained a relatively stable military regime. The Honduran governing elite thus combined repressive forms of rule with reforms. In that way, they never drove the poor masses into revolutionary struggle but created a rather stable authoritarian regime (Schultz 1992: 6-7):

> In short, Honduran society was characterized by an elaborate network of interlocking interest groups and political organizations that mediated conflicts and channeled personal ambitions that might otherwise have proven explosive. The constant struggle within and between competing groups had long constituted the essence of Honduran politics. Loyalties were always shifting and often for sale; this has enabled both military and civilian authorities to use state resources (jobs, bribes, and favors) to defuse potentially destabilizing move-

> ments before they became dangerous. At the same time, the very fact that Honduran elites were flexible enough to allow political space for so many groups made it possible for the system to co-opt important socioeconomic and political forces that were denied participation in neighboring lands (Schultz & Sundloff-Schultz 1994: 318).

A violent guerrilla movement with broad popular support never emerged in Honduras (Schultz & Sundloff-Schultz 1994: 320-321; Schultz 1992: 8). The insurgent movements were "crippled from their inception and were never able to build the kind of momentum that other Central American guerrilla movements attained" (Schultz 1992: viii). There were, as discussed above, relatively strong popular sectors but they did not demand radical change.[21] Thus, the regime accepted a certain level of social and economic pluralism and a civil society could develop. However, it was contained both through populist and clientelist means (cf. Oxhorn 1995: 252).

Summary

The nature of civil society, and its relation to the state in the pre-transition period, leave a legacy that is important for our understanding of civil society in the transition and post-transition periods. Compared to the neighboring countries, the Honduran authoritarian regime accepted moderate pluralism and a slowly emerging civil society. Since the 1950s, Honduran civil society, at the time mainly made up of worker and peasant movements, and later student and professional groups, has had the right to organize itself in a way that none of the neighboring countries accepted. In this regard, Honduran society rather resembled Costa Rica. However, the authoritarian regime has, through different means, tried to split and to co-opt civil society as a strategy to control the social forces to avoid radicalism. By accommodating the poor sectors, the regime was able to control the peasant and labor movement. By setting up parallel organizations and by favoring some groups, the government also managed to manipulate and split the peasant and worker movement. This is particularly visible in the 1970s, but these tendencies can be traced back to the 1950s.

Notes

1 Central America was, together with Mexico, granted independence from Spain in 1821. The process of independence was, according to Torres Rivas, an elite project (1993: 1), and Acker describes the process as a power struggle between *criollos* and *peninsulares* (colonists born in Central America and colonists born in Spain) (Acker 1988: 36). In 1823 Central America left Mexico and formed the United Provinces of Central America (see e.g. Acker for a discussion of the federation and General Morazán's federal ideas). The federation lasted until 1839.

2 Euraque argues that the elite abandoned the coffee growing regions for the North Coast in 1880s and 1890s. But the reasons were not all the obstacles, but rather that both the commercial and the landed elite had more to gain from bananas (1996: 13).

3 Torres Rivas argues that the modernization took place in an enclave and that the state never gained anything from the banana industry. Even though the salaries were higher (up to 100-300 percent) compared to other sectors, the workers spent their salaries in the company's stores (*tiendas de raya*) with imported goods. This affected the local markets negatively (Torres Rivas 1993: 33-35; see also Laínez & Meza 1985: 36-37).

4 As of today, there is still no railroad connection to Tegucigalpa, Honduras' capital.

5 H. V. Rolston, vice president at Cuyamel Fruit Company, wrote a letter to the company lawyer that expressed how far the company was prepared to go with briberies etc. to ensure its position in Honduras. The authenticity of the letter has, however, been debated. The letter can be found in Nancy Peckenham & Annie Street (eds.) (1985: 45-47) and Alison Acker (1988: 65-66).

6 Cuyamel also had an extended network of friends and allies. The difference was that its president, Zemurray, had long experience of living in Honduras and was familiar with the Honduran traditions. According to Edward Boatman-Guillan "United was seen as a cold, distant, and powerful entity, whose local functionaries followed general orders given in Boston for all its tropical divisions. Zemurray's personal methods fit the Honduran scene better, in both local and national negotiations" (Boatman-Guillan 1985: 42).

7 Caudillo means leader or boss. "In its broadest political sense, caudillismo in Latin America has popularly come to mean any highly personalistic and quasi-military regime whose party mechanisms, administrative procedures, and legislative functions are subject to the intimate and immediate control of a charismatic leader and his cadre of mediating officials." At the local level, we more commonly find the Indian-derived *cacique* which signifies chief (Silvert, 1968: 347-348).

8 Carías changed his four-year term to six years, and the law that barred re-election. As the Nationalists were in the majority in the Congress and in control of the Supreme Court, nobody opposed him (Morris 1984: 7-9).

9 Continuismo is a well-known phenomenon in Latin America and refers to the "retention of power beyond the legal terms of office" (Morris 1984: 8). Continuismo is a traditional and well-known practice for Honduran political leaders: "Continuismo in Honduras has been defined strictly to mean the continuance of a president in power through changing the constitution or the laws, and, broadly, to mean the retention of power beyond the legal term by whatever means" (Stokes 1950: 257).

10 The first strike took place at Cuyamel in 1916, caused by the exchange rate in the company store (Acker 1988: 78-80).

11 Coffee, beef and cotton had become important export products in the 1950s and 1960s (Ruhl 1984: 36-39).

12 Carías wanted the National Party to support him, but the PN was split between *carístas* (followers of Carías) and the more progressive *reformistas* (followers of Movimiento Nacional Reformista, MNR). Villeda Morales, who had returned from exile, was the liberal candidate (Dunkerley 1988: 528).

13 Similar anti-Communist laws could be found elsewhere in the region at the time.

14 This was the first election with female suffrage (Morris 1984: 11).

15 See also Ralph J. Jr. Woodward (1999: 239-242) or Deborah J. Yashar (1997: 130-137) for a discussion of agrarian reforms in Guatemala.

16 The Liberal candidate Modesto Rodas Alvarado was a challenge to the military. In the National Party, Carías Andino, who was still an important actor, wanted his son Gonzalez to be the candidate. However, most Nationalists preferred ex-president Juan Manuel Gálvez, and the compromise was Dr. Ramón Ernesto Cruz Uclés, a lawyer and, according to Morris, "colorless". Rodas would probably have won, and therefore the military allied themselves with PN (Morris 1984: 39).

17 As Sieder notes, populism in the Latin American context is often associated with the urban working class such as the Peronism in Argentina. Yet the military regime in the 1970s is best described as a combination reformist-populist regime (1996b: 111).

18 The split within the military was between *oficiales de la línea* (officers who supported the reformist policy) and *oficiales académicos* who were more concerned about the professionalization of the armed forces (Sieder 1996b: 119-120). See Sieder (1996b) for an elaborated discussion on the military reformism.

19 For a detailed overview of the five Central American republics, see Woodward (1999).

20 FECORAH received preferential access to land, and ANACH received official credit, but UNC was denied credit and legalization (*personería juridical*) (Sieder 1996b: 125).

21 Honduras had no charismatic religious leader like Oscar Romero, or a strong liberation theology movement that criticized the socioeconomic and political situation in the country (Peckenham & Street 1985: 167-171). It was not only the Catholic Church that was weak (in this sense) in Honduras: "If the Catholic church has little tradition of speaking out against social injustices the Protestant churches in Honduras have even less" (Peckenham & Street 1985: 171).

Chapter Seven

Top-Down Transition From Military Rule to Hybrid Democracy

> The process of democratization in Honduras since 1980 has been both irregular and incomplete. Following 16 years of nearly continuous military rule in Honduras, a constituent assembly was elected in 1980 which paved the way for elections in November of the following year. However, the transition to elected government coincided with a period of accelerated militarization, in large part a consequence of US strategic designs in the unfolding Central American conflict (Sieder 1996a: 19).

In the 1980s Honduras returned to constitutional rule. The transition was caused by the weak and internally split military regime and by the United States' pressure for elections. The transition from military rule took place in the midst of an escalating crisis in the Central American isthmus, and is best described as a transition that was initiated and controlled by the military government. At the initial stages of the transition, civil society played only a limited role. In the late 1980s, however, civil society reacted against the increased militarization and the deteriorating human rights situation in the country and demanded an end to military impunity and respect for human rights.

Return to Constitutional Rule

In late 1975, General Juan Alberto Melgar Castro announced that Honduras would return to constitutional rule in the 1980s (Posas 1980: 52-53). In December 1977, a new electoral law was passed that required internal democratization of the political parties, which implied that every faction and movement within the parties should be allowed to participate in the leadership selection. The new law also stated that a National

Electoral Tribunal (TNE) should be established (Sieder 1996a: 22). Melgar Castro was overthrown in August 1978, and the leaders of the coup formed a junta over which General Policarpo Paz García became president (e.g. Anderson 1988: 139). Paz had close relations with the National Party and included three members of the National Party in his cabinet, among these the party boss Ricardo Zúñiga (Anderson 1988: 142; Posas 1980: 53). The transition to democracy was formally initiated with the elections to a Constituent Assembly in April 1980. The Constituent Assembly was supposed to draft a new constitution and to set a date for general elections.

The Liberals, Nationalists, and the new Social Democratic Party, Partido de Innovación Nacional y Unidad (PINU), participated in the election, which was marked by a high turnout (Ruhl 2000: 52; Sieder 1996a: 23). The Christian Democratic Party (Partido Demócrata Cristiano de Honduras, PDCH) was not allowed to participate because it had received funding from Christian Democrats in Venezuela, and neither was the Communist Party (PCH) because its ideology was seen as irreconcilable with the "democratic spirit of the Honduran people" (Anderson 1988: 145). Thomas P. Anderson argues that Paz wanted to arrange a nationalist victory, so that the National Party could name him president. Even though some groups were convinced that the elections would be manipulated, the elections were actually fairly clean (Anderson 1988: 145-146).[1] One reason for this was the US pressure for free and fair elections. Another reason was that Paz faced competition from Ricardo Zúñiga. In addition, there were deep divisions within the military, and some groups did not trust Paz. The younger leftist officers accused the government of corruption, and warned against manipulated elections. Finally, there was general unrest in the country, with conflicts between troops and peasants, and strikers who were arrested by the military, followed by student protests at UNAH, the national university (Anderson 1988: 145-146). Thus, Paz was challenged from various groups and was, accordingly, not in a position to manipulate the elections.

The Liberals won the elections to the Constituent Assembly with 49 percent to the National Party's 42 percent. This resulted in 35 seats to the Liberals, 33 to the Nationalists and 3 to PINU (Sieder 1996a: 23). The result can be interpreted as a punishment for the National Party's close relations with the military. The population was tired of corruption and

military rule (see e.g. Lapper 1985: 77). However, the lack of an absolute majority forced the Liberals to form a pact with the National Party and the armed forces (Sieder 1996a: 23; Anderson 1988: 147). The Liberal leader Roberto Suazo Córdova was made President of the Constituent Assembly. Nine people were appointed to the provisional cabinet by the Constituent Assembly and five by the Superior Council of the Armed Forces (CONSUFFAA). Thus, the military was not bereaved of power. Together with the National Party, the military was still in control of areas such as foreign relations, defense, public works and finance (Anderson 1988: 147-148).

The Liberal Party wanted the Assembly to select a president, whereas PINU and the National Party wanted direct presidential elections. This disunity created a political stalemate. Eventually, it was decided that there would be direct presidential elections, and that Paz would serve as interim president until the presidential elections were held in November 1981 (Lapper 1985: 76-77; Anderson 1988: 148). In August 1980, CONSUFFAA made changes and removed the more progressive and liberal officers (Lapper 1985: 78):

> In the domestic political sphere, the period between April 1980 and the presidential elections of November 1981 was marked by a prolonged bout of jockeying both between civilian politicians and the military and within the military establishment (Lapper 1985: 78).

The new constitution was however drafted more rapidly than expected. It stated a four-year term for the president and the unicameral Assembly. The Congress would appoint the magistrates of the Supreme Court. Every party could name one member to the National Electoral Tribunal and the Supreme Court appointed one additional member. PDCH was finally legalized in July 1980 and was allowed to participate in the elections. The new constitution also secured the armed forces' autonomy. CONSUFFAA remained in control of the military institutions, and was responsible for the election of the chief of the armed forces (Anderson 1988: 154).

1981 General Elections

With the elections approaching, the civilian politicians realized that some sort of accommodation with the military was necessary for the elections

to actually be held. A meeting between the CONSUFFAA and the leaders of the two main political parties took place in Tegucigalpa in October 1981, which resulted in an agreement that there would be no investigation of military corruption, that the military would have a veto over cabinet appointments and that there would be no interference of civilians in military affairs (Lapper 1985: 81; Acker 1988: 115). This pact might have facilitated the transition, but it meant that the new democracy was circumscribed from the very beginning.

Elections were scheduled for November 1981. PINU and PCDH wanted to postpone the elections, because of irregularities in the electoral rolls, but the Liberal Party and the National Party wanted the elections to be held as planned. The USA also pressed for the elections to be held as scheduled (Lapper 1985: 81). The elections took place as planned in November 1981, and around 80 percent of the electorate voted for the four legalized parties (Sieder 1996a: 25). The Liberal Party and Roberto Suazo Córdova—a medical doctor from La Paz—won with 54 percent of the votes (44 seats) compared to 42 percent for the National Party (33 seats) and 4 percent for the other parties (3 seats to PINU and 1 seat to PCDH) (Anderson 1988: 155). With the first general elections, electoral democracy was established. However, as it turned out, the civilian leadership was very weak and due to the regional crisis, the military successfully expanded its power base.

Why Did Honduras Return to Constitutional Rule?

The literature on the motives behind the Honduran military government's decision to arrange a transition from military rule to constitutional is quite limited.[2] Yet a number of reasons behind the decision can be identified. One reason seems to be a split within the military regime, in combination with a lack of visions. The armed forces were also highly discredited due to accusations of corruption and economic mismanagement. In addition, the USA pressured for a return to constitutional rule. In their attempts to fight the Sandinista government in Nicaragua, they needed a reliable ally in the region.

> The return to constitutionalism had been on the agenda since at least 1977, less because of mass mobilization for democratic rights than because the military found itself bereft of any viable initiative after the collapse of its reformist experiment of 1972-1975 (Dunkerley 1988: 540).

By the end of the 1970s, the military reformism had collapsed. The armed forces had lost both vision and ideological coherence (Sieder & Dunkerley 1996: 71). The military regime clearly lacked a profile or a clear political program and, as a consequence, the military's popularity was fading by the late 1970s. Support from peasant and labor movements decreased when the social reforms, e.g. the agrarian reform, were slowed down.[3] When peasants protested, the military fell back into traditional patterns of repression (Sieder & Dunkerley 1996: 71). In addition, the private sector accused the military of economic mismanagement (Ruhl 2000: 51). Corruption was widespread in the military governments, and several officers were engaged in drug trafficking. According to Anderson, corruption has always existed in Honduras, but "Paz and his cronies made it into a systematic science" (1988: 144). Hence by 1978 the military was gravely discredited (Sieder & Dunkerley 1996: 71). According to Donald E. Schultz & Deborah Sundloff-Schultz, it was the diversity of the military that was their Achilles heel (1994: 47). The officers did not constitute a homogenous group; their ranks contained both reformers and conservatives (1994: 47). The military was, among other things, deeply divided concerning Nicaragua—the senior officers generally supported Somoza, whereas the younger officers supported the Sandinistas (Anderson 1988: 142).

The Honduran military had not built up a strong foundation for popular support based on their heroic deeds. Thus, in the absence of a perceived legitimacy built upon military performance, or a vision or ideology, the military no longer had any *raison d'être* in the political sphere. Moreover, the military had, according to James Dunkerley, not built a "stable and systematic form of institutional rule" as the military had done in for example Guatemala and El Salvador. The Honduran military

preferred to get support and counsel from the National Party, which remained close to the military for a long time (Dunkerley 1988: 524).

In the late 1970s, there was increasing unrest in Honduran society at large. Against this background, the military wanted to hand over power in order to avoid escalating conflicts. Donald E. Schultz argues that the return to constitutional rule was an escape valve to avoid revolutionary violence (1992: viii). The Honduran governing elite used the transition as a strategy to avoid violence (Schultz 1992: 4-5). In this regard, Honduras differs from its neighbors; the governing elite in Guatemala, Nicaragua and El Salvador did not accept a return to democratic rule until the wars had broken out (ibid.).

External Influence

Prior to the Sandinista revolution in Nicaragua in 1979, Honduras had never been a top priority for the USA (e.g. Schultz & Sundloff-Schultz 1994: 55). But, when the Sandinistas seized power, Honduras was regarded as a key ally for restricting the activities of the revolutionary left in the region. There was a fear that revolutionary ideas would spread to the already conflict-ridden Guatemala and El Salvador (Wheelock Román 1997: 81). In this context, Honduras gained a new geopolitical role, which clearly influenced political life (Lapper 1985: 74). Honduras became the new linchpin of the United States' attempts to solve the problems in Central America (Lapper 1985: 74). When the Somoza regime collapsed in Nicaragua, the Carter administration put pressure on the Honduran military to return to constitutional rule.[4] In return, Honduras would receive increased military aid (Ruhl 2000: 51-52; Biekart 1999: 156; see also Lapper 1985: 76). The USA agreed to give US$ 500,000 to the military, and ten times that amount after the elections had been held (Anderson 1988: 145). The price Honduras had to pay was a loss of sovereignty and as Kees Biekart puts it: "legitimised increase of power for the armed forces" (1999: 156). The more specific hidden agenda of the USA was to fight the Sandinistas in Nicaragua and the insurgency movements in El Salvador. However, President Carter "did not want the embarrassment of working with another military despot", and therefore the USA pressed for a return to constitutional rule (Lapper 1985: 76):

> Apart from its counterinsurgent intent, U.S. policy did facilitate the opening up of democratic expression and respect for civil and human liberties, which relieved some of the accumulated social and political pressures (Wheelock Román 1997: 81).

And, Honduras was in desperate need of foreign aid, due to the economic stagnation in the country. When Paz took over as president of the military junta in July 1978, the per capita income of US$ 569.50 was the lowest in the region. The national income was growing in 1977-1978 but the population was also growing fast (3.7 percent annually) (Anderson 1988: 141). In addition, the economy had been hit by falling world prices for coffee and bananas, and private investors moved their money abroad. Prices and unemployment were rising, production was falling and Honduras had a foreign debt that represented half the gross domestic product (Acker 1988: 127). The public sector was large and inefficient, and this also contributed to the low investments (World Bank, *Honduras. Country Brief*, 1999). Thus, the transition occurred in the midst of a deepening economic crisis. To conclude, then, the transition seems to be a result of a combination of factors: the weakened and divided military regime, the regional crisis and the external pressure. The deteriorating economic situation and the regional instability generally made Honduras desperate for financial and military support:

> The return to constitutional government was the outcome of the exhaustion of military rule and, in the context of mounting regional crisis, represented a preemptive attempt by Honduran elites to stave off popular discontent (Sieder 1996a: 21).

A Regime-Controlled Transition

Samuel P. Huntington classifies Honduras as a transition through transplacement. Transplacement refers to the transitions that are a result of combined actions of the government and its opposition. For a transition through transplacement to take place, there must be a balance between standpatters and reformers, and the government must be willing to

negotiate a change of the regime (see Huntington 1991: 151). Huntington's categorization of Honduras as a case of transition through transplacement is not entirely convincing. This study would rather argue that Honduras is a case of transition through transformation. The ruling elite (the military government) initiated and controlled the transition. However, Huntington admits that the "line between transformations and transplacements is fuzzy, and some cases might be legitimately classified in either category" (1991: 124) and it could, of course, be argued that a transition through transformation is likely to develop into a transition through transplacement (Sannerstedt 1994: 78). The reason for Huntington's decision to classify Honduras as a transplacement-transition was the negotiations with the USA, which was "acting as a surrogate for democratic moderates" (Huntington 1991: 151-152). Thus, there might be an element of transplacement in the transition, but, nevertheless, transformation seems to be a more adequate description. Marc Lindenberg also categorizes the Honduran transition as a regime-led transition (1997: 181). A narrow spectrum of groups was included and the traditional elite enjoyed a predominant position (Lindenberg 1997: 182). But clearly the USA played an important role in the transition. Einar Berntzen, for example, categorizes the transition as a US-imposed democratization (1993: 599). But external pressure was not enough—if the military had not been willing to hand over power, Honduras would not have initiated the transition in 1980.

In sum, the Honduran transition to democracy is best described as a transition through transformation (or *reforma*, or transaction), with elements of a transition through transplacement (or extrication). The transition included both pact making and US pressure. In elite-guided transitions, civil society normally plays a relatively limited role (Gill 2000: 127), and this was also the case in Honduras. Honduras, during the authoritarian rule, had a relatively strong civil society including labor unions, peasant organizations, student movements and professional associations. However, the co-optive strategies of the reformist militaries had contributed to a split within civil society. Thus, there was no strong social force that demanded a return to democracy. However, this study argues that it was the political development after the formal transition to democracy that eventually provoked a reaction from civil society. Civil society can apply pressure for

a democratic orientation of the political reforms (Gill 2000: 60), and this is exactly what happened in Honduras. The political elite decided to return to constitutional rule, but few were interested in establishing a real democracy.

A Hybrid Democracy

Paradoxically, the return to constitutionalism and civilian rule coincided with the increased power of the armed forces. President Reagan pursued a different policy towards Central America than the Carter administration had done. Reagan wanted to confront the Sandinistas before the revolution was consolidated (Lapper 1985: 82; Schultz & Sundloff-Schultz 1994: 63-64).[5] Hence, partly as a consequence of the Reagan administration's policies towards Central America, Honduras became highly militarized. Between 1978 and 1982, US military aid to Honduras skyrocketed, and the armed forces doubled in size. In 1982, Honduras had become the second largest receiver (after El Salvador) of US aid in Latin America (Sieder & Dunkerley 1996: 72). As a result, Honduras became a highly militarized state, often referred to as the "Pentagon republic" (see e.g. Acker 1988: 114; Lapper 1985: 88).

The First Democratic Government

By the early 1980s, Honduras was in practice ruled by a triumvirate made up of the US ambassador to Honduras, John Negroponte, the head of CONSUFFAA, Gustavo Alvarez Martínez and President Suazo Córdova (e.g. Lapper 1985: 83). As a consequence of Honduras' new geopolitical importance, the American embassy in Tegucigalpa was upgraded from grade four to grade two, thereby increasing its importance, and the ambassador Jack Binns was replaced by John Negroponte, who has been described as a fierce anti-communist with experience from Southeast Asia (Lapper 1985: 82-83; Acker 1988: 115). When the new ambassador had been installed, Alvarez, described as a hard-line anti-communist who had been chief of the security forces (FUSEP), became head of CONSUFAA (Lapper 1985: 83; Schultz & Sundloff-Schultz 1994: 73):

> Over the next two years the Alvarez-Negroponte-Suazo triumvirate ruled Honduras […] Suazo's role was to turn the Assembly into a rubber stamp for executive policy. Negroponte's relationship with Alvarez was never as crude as that of puppeteer to puppet. In fact they shared the same basic goals: a deep anti-communism and desire to bring down the Sandinista government (Lapper 1985: 83).[6]

The most powerful actors in the trio (Alvarez-Negroponte-Suazo) were the embassy and the military (Schultz and Sundloff-Schultz 1994: 72). Several US military facilities were established, among them a regional defense center (CREM) that trained foreign and Honduran troops, and there were several joint US-Honduran maneuvers (Anderson 1988: 157).[7] The CREM was set up after an agreement between the US and Alvarez. The Honduran Congress did not know anything about the agreement before the troops arrived (Acker 1988: 117; Lapper 1985: 98). The government generally had little control over the US presence in the country. For example, US troops flew in to the Palmerola airbase without passing through any customs or immigration procedures and, as a result, the Honduran government had no information about how many US troops that actually were on Honduran territory (Lapper 1985: 90).

With the tacit support of President Suazo and the USA, Alvarez implemented a national security doctrine, well known to the Southern Cone, in Honduras (Salomón 1985: 197-198).[8] Alvarez managed to secure considerable power for himself, which he used to repress left-wing opposition movements. An advanced apparatus for repression was created, including for example intelligence-gathering services and a new counterinsurgency unit (the cobras) (Lapper 1985: 92). The targets of the repression were political and popular organizations. The cobras and special "hit squads" carried out the human rights abuses (Lapper 1985: 94).[9] Alvarez was committed to overthrowing the Sandinista government, and to eliminating the small guerrilla groups that existed in Honduras and started what Mark J. Ruhl refers to as a "dirty war" against these guerrilla groups (Ruhl 2000: 53).[10] Battalion 3-16—the counter-terrorist unit—and the Dirección Nacional de Investigaciones (DNI) and Fuerza de Seguridad Pública (FUSEP) used torture and assassinations to destroy the

guerrillas. The security forces also infiltrated student organizations, labor unions and peasant groups (Ruhl 2000: 53). Compared with Guatemala, for example, there were relatively few abuses of human rights, but the psychological effects of the massive counter-insurgency apparatus should not be underestimated. In March 1984, Alvarez was ousted from his post by other high-ranking military officers. His ambitions to control the military and his arrogance led to his fall (Ruhl 2000: 53). In addition to his taste for absolute power, Richard Lapper speculates about corruption, human rights abuses, and Alvarez's connections to a religious sect as potential causes of his downfall (Lapper 1985: 104). CONSUFFAA appointed Walter López Reyes as the commander-in-chief. Under López Reyes the repression subsided and civil society was allowed some space (Ruhl 2000: 54).

It was not only the military's human rights violations but also the civilian politicians and institutions that added to the weak democracy. The judiciary, for example, was one civilian institution that clearly had democratic deficits. The Liberal and National parties divided the spoils of government between themselves. The Liberal Party named the President of the Congress and, as compensation, the National Party received the right to name five out of the nine justices of the Supreme Court, including its president (Americas Watch Committee 1987: 72):

> The treatment of the nation's highest judicial body as one of the spoils to be divided among parties is deplorable because it undermines the independence of the judiciary, making the court a political football vulnerable to the corrupting influences of politics and money. An independent judiciary is essential to establishing genuine democracy and institutionalizing respect for the law (Americas Watch Committee 1987: 72).

Civilian politicians like Suazo wanted wealth, power and *chamba* (patronage) for his supporters, and this behavior clearly undermined democracy. Corruption was widespread in Suazo's administration (Ruhl 2000: 54). Overall, Suazo demonstrated little respect for democratic institutions (Sieder 1996a: 26). The last months of Suazo's regime are a telling example of his disrespect for the democratic process. Several months before the

elections, there had been rumors circulating that Suazo planned to prolong his mandate (Schultz & Sundloff-Schultz 1994: 122). The first democratically elected president used bribery and his control over the Electoral Tribunal and the Supreme Court to interfere in the nomination process for the upcoming elections (Ruhl 2000: 54). The new constitution, which had come into effect on January 19, 1982, prohibited re-elections, but Suazo claimed that the constitution had come into effect after his inauguration, and that he had come to power under the 1957 constitution that stipulated a six-year term. Suazo clearly had *continuista* intentions. As a response to his attempts to interfere in the democratic process, the Congress ultimately demanded that new magistrates be appointed to the Supreme Court. The Suazo-loyal judges were found guilty of corruption and subsequently removed (see e.g. Sieder 1996a: 26-27). Thus, the crisis was eventually solved and elections were held in November 1985, as scheduled.[11]

Continued Liberal Rule

The Liberal José Azcona de Hoyo won the election of 1985.[12] Azcona was an opponent to Suazo and arguably had more respect for constitutional rules. But the Liberal Party was fractionalized and never gave Azcona congressional support (Ruhl 2000: 54-55). Hence, Azcona's government was politically weak, and did not have the strength to question the activities of the armed forces (Ruhl 1996: 39). The armed forces, for example, did not accept Azcona's appointment of Carlos Roberto Reina as his Minister of Foreign Affairs, because Reina was considered to be too far to the political left (Ruhl 1996: 39-40). The armed forces were, however, still split due to personal rivalries and corruption. In addition, the younger reformist officers opposed Honduran support for the Contra war in Nicaragua (Biekart 1999: 158).

Azcona had inherited a bankrupt economy, a system of continuing human rights violations, a guerilla war against Nicaragua, a powerful military and a growing popular unrest (Schultz & Sundloff-Schultz 1994: 133). In 1986, CONSUFFAA replaced López Reyes with hard-line Humberto Regalado Hernández as chief of the armed forces (Ruhl 1996: 39). Political disappearances and military corruption increased:

> Regalado and other senior officers enriched themselves by misappropriating military funds and by participating in the international narcotics trade (Ruhl 2000: 55).

However, Azcona did not confront the armed forces and never challenged Regalado's involvement in drug trafficking and human rights violations. After two civilian governments, Honduras seemed to be a classic example of a *democradura*—a democratic country dominated by the armed forces (Ruhl 2000: 55). For example, the control of the armed forces was in the hands of the chief of the armed forces and CONSUFFAA, and not in the hands of the president. In addition, there was no legislative oversight of the military budget, and the police force FUSEP was still controlled by the armed forces. Military officers furthermore had de facto immunity from prosecution. The military also had considerable economic power, and the armed forces controlled several state enterprises, such as the telecommunications company HONDUTEL (Ruhl 1996: 40-41).

According to an Americas Watch report from 1987, the behavior of the security forces FUSEP and DNI was particularly alarming. The report shows that the armed forces were guilty of several abuses of civilians, especially of civilians with leftist connections and of Salvadoran refugees in the border region. The report also mentions the disappearances, and the torture committed by Battalion 3-16. The human rights abuses coexisted with an inefficient judicial system. In August 1986, 84 percent of the prisoners had not been tried in a court (Americas Watch Committee 1987: 1-3). In 1986, an unsigned "death list" circulated in several cities. This list identified well-known civilians as "the Honduran revolutionary leadership". The civilians were, among others, Carlos Roberto Reina and his brother Jorge Arturo Reina, who both belonged to the social democratic faction of the Liberal Party, and Victor Meza—a prominent journalist (Schultz & Sundloff-Schultz 1994: 168).

What also added to the deteriorating human rights situation was that Contras were still camped out on Honduran territory. Dunkerley estimates that at least 10,000 Contra rebels existed on Honduran territory (1988: 573). In 1986 they were occupying over twenty villages in the departments of El Paraíso and Olancho—this area was called "Nueva

Nicaragua", and the town Capire was often referred to as "Managuita" (Schultz & Sundloff-Schultz 1994: 170-171). Both Contras and Sandinistas crossed back and forth over the Honduran-Nicaraguan border, and the area was very insecure, with violence, murders and the constant danger of land mines. This forced Honduran peasants to leave the region (Anderson 1988: 158; Schultz & Sundloff-Schultz 1994: 112). Coffee growers protested to the government as Contra rebels damaged the crops and scared off the workers. As a result, opposition against the Contra presence grew in every sector of Honduran society (Schultz & Sundloff-Schultz 1994: 170-171). During his time in office, Suazo had maintained that there were no Contras in Honduras, and Azcona followed the same line (Anderson 1988: 163). However, in April 1986 Azcona finally admitted the presence of Contras and that they freely crossed the Nicaraguan-Honduran border (Schultz & Sundloff-Schultz 1994: 165).

But US interest in the region and support for the Contras soon declined, beginning with the Iran-Contra scandal in November 1986. The Esquipulas peace agreement[13] and the end of the Cold War started a transition to peace in the region, and as a consequence the Nicaraguan and Salvadoran armies were downsized. This clearly reduced the American interest in Honduras. The fragile peace process changed the situation for Honduras, especially as the Honduran military had become dependent on US military aid. When the USA was no longer in need of an ally, they did not accept economic intransigence (Ruhl 2000: 55). The Honduran military was no longer an ally against Communism but rather seen as a "corrupt and costly obstacle to democratization" (Ruhl 2000: 56). The financial situation in the country became a disaster, with an average annual growth of 0.8 percent between 1980 and 1984, with an increasing budget deficit and with increasing foreign debt (Anderson 1988: 162). The social situation was rapidly deteriorating and the USA pressed for an IMF austerity program (Schultz & Sundloff-Schultz 1994: 198-199; Ruhl 1997: 84).

Neoliberal Policies and Steps Towards Democracy

Rafael Leonardo Callejas was the first presidential candidate from the National Party to win an election after the transition from military rule.[14]

The voters punished the Liberals for the economic crisis (Ruhl 2000: 56), for the misuse of power, the Contras war, the widespread corruption and general ineptitude (Schultz & Sundloff-Schultz 1994: 270). During the Callejas administration, several reforms were implemented that actually reduced the power of the military.

When Callejas was inaugurated, the per capita income was 13 percent lower than it had been in 1980. Inflation was increasing and the foreign debt was US$ 3.3 billion (Schultz & Sundloff-Schultz 1994: 273). Against this background, Callejas was compelled to implement a structural adjustment program that aimed at shrinking the size of the bureaucracy, increasing taxes and charges for public services, liberalizing trade and devaluing the lempira. Callejas also attracted foreign investments to the *maquiladora* industry. Real incomes shrank, and Callejas had a hard time persuading people that this economic policy was necessary. In 1994, Callejas subverted his economic reform program and, for example, he raised the salaries of public employees. Consequently, the deficit once again became unmanageable. It has been argued that it was corruption that made Calljas subvert his reform program (Ruhl 2000: 57-58).

Callejas also initiated a process of concertation with various sectors in society. The necessity of implementing structural adjustments programs accentuated the need of popular legitimacy for Callejas' economic policy. He therefore initiated a process of concertation with various sectors in society such as the private business sector (COHEP), the civil society coalition Plataforma de Lucha, peasant organizations, labor unions and political parties (PINU and PDCH). Callejas emphasized the importance of shared responsibility for his economic policy in this difficult situation (Salomón 1998b: 62-79). Callejas also reactivated the Commission for National Reconciliation, which was originally established in 1987 as a result of the Esquipulas peace agreement, to unite the various sectors in society. The Commission for National Reconciliation granted amnesty to various groups of society, such as peasants who, by their land incursions, were accused of being a security threat to the state, as well as to the armed forces (Salomón 1998b: 79-83).

Callejas implemented important reforms that curbed military power. He designated the human rights activist and professor of law, Leo

Valladares, as National Commissioner for Protection of Human Rights in December 1992. The Human Rights Commissioner was to investigate human rights violations. Valladares got access to US State Department files, and found a systematic campaign of human rights abuses, and evidence of US and Argentinian training of Honduran and Contras militaries in torture techniques. Several high officers like Regalado Hernández, López Reyes and Discua Elvir had been involved in the training (Sieder & Dunkerley 1996: 75-76). In the Human Rights Commissioner's report the military was found responsible for the disappearances of 184 persons in the 1980s (Ruhl 2000: 57).[15]

President Callejas therefore created an Ad Hoc Commission for Institutional Reform (Rosenberg & Ruhl 1996: 71). The Ad Hoc Commission emerged in a context of increasing citizen insecurity and doubt concerning the judicial power and the competence of the police to guarantee security (Salomón 1998b: 84; Salomón 1994: 67-68). The Commission, which was chaired by Oscar Andrés Rodríguez, the Archbishop of Tegucigalpa, was supposed to investigate the military and the police forces DNI and FUSEP, and to present a proposal for a reform of the security forces and the judicial system (see e.g. Biekart 1999: 159; Rosenberg & Ruhl 1996: 71). Representatives from all four political parties, from the government, the Congress, the Supreme Court, the military and the mass media, participated in the Ad Hoc Commission (Rosenberg & Ruhl 1996: 71). Human rights organizations were not invited, but according to Leticia Salomón, CODEH, COFADEH, Visitación Padilla and Plataforma de Lucha were consulted (Salomón 1998b: 86). In April, the Ad Hoc Commission presented its proposals (Rosenberg & Ruhl 1996: 71). The Commission recommended that the military controlled DNI be abolished and replaced with a civilian controlled body—DIC (División de Investigaciones Criminales)—and that a national group outline a reform of FUSEP that would place it under civilian control. The Commission also suggested the creation of a Public Ministry (Ministerio Público) and reforms of the judicial power. The Congress voted for the establishment for DIC and the new Public Ministry in December 1993 (Sieder & Dunkerley 1996: 75-76; Salomón 1998b: 86-87).[16]

Reducing Military Power

In the electoral campaign in 1993, military impunity and disappearances were the major issues. The National Party's candidate Oswaldo Ramos Soto was associated with the military (Schultz & Sundloff-Schultz 1994: 327).[17] Thus, the Liberal candidate Carlos Roberto Reina easily won the election with 53 percent to 43 percent for Soto (Ruhl 2000: 58; Biekart 1999: 159). Reina was from the liberal left of the Liberal Party. He had a background as President of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, and was generally considered as "unfriendly" to the armed forces (Ruhl 1996: 47). Reina had based his campaign on promises to cut the military's size and budget, reduce military corruption and human rights abuses, end mandatory military service and place the police under civilian control (Rosenberg & Ruhl 1996: 71).

Reina implemented a series of initiatives that had begun under Callejas (Ruhl 1996: 48; Rosenberg & Ruhl 1996: 72). However, he proceeded carefully and praised the professionalism of the military (Ruhl 1996: 48; see also Ruhl 1997: 82-84). Reina followed the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Commission and replaced DNI with DIC (Dirección de Investigación Criminal) under the civilian Public Ministry. He also transferred the Treasury Police from FUSEP to civilian authority. For the first time since 1963, the entire police force came under civilian control (Ruhl 1996: 49-50; Ruhl 2000: 58; Sieder & Dunkerley 1996: 73-74). Moreover, Reina also decreased the size of the army, cut the military budget by 10 percent, and replaced the unpopular mandatory military service with a voluntary and educational military service (Ruhl 1996: 48-50). In addition, Reina also reduced the military's economic power:

> Reina also denied the armed forces major sources of illicit funding when he ended the military's longstanding control of the Honduran telecommunications system, the immigration department, and the merchant marine (Ruhl 2000: 58).[18]

The process of curbing the military power was not easy. The army argued that its personnel were shielded from prosecution concerning human rights violations by amnesties passed during the Callejas administration

(Ruhl 1997: 83; Ruhl 2000: 59). Moreover, selection and dismissal of the chief of the armed forces was not in the hands of the president (according to the 1982 constitution). CONSUFFAA sent the Congress a list of three names to choose from. Ruhl argues that Reina could have taken action to alter the selection of the chief of the armed forces before Hung Pacheco was selected in January 1996. He did not, but the military agreed to subordinate itself to a Minister of Defense, appointed by the president, when Hung Pacheco's term ended (in 1999) (Ruhl 1997: 83). The reforms were not popular everywhere, and President Reina, the Supreme Court, the Congress and human rights groups were targets for bombings in 1995 and 1996. Moreover, judges in human rights cases received death threats (Ruhl 1997: 83).

Completing the Transition

Carlos Flores Facussé of the Liberal Party won the election in 1997 over the Nationalist candidate Nora Gúnera de Melgar. President Flores continued with demilitarization and economic reforms. He reached an agreement with the chief of the armed forces, Hung Pacheco, on a constitutional reform, which placed the armed forces under civilian control for the first time since 1957. The Congress voted for the constitutional reform in September 1998 and January 1999 (Ruhl 2000: 60). Thus, the transition was finally completed:

> By early 1999, Honduras had completed the transition to procedural democracy that had begun almost two decades earlier. A system of free and fair elections open to all adults finally had become institutionalized and an acceptable level of civil and political liberties had been attained. Honduras's pluralist civil society was well established. Although the armed forces still enjoyed considerable institutional autonomy, their political influence had declined dramatically (Ruhl 2000: 61).

Civil Society in the Transition

Indeed, the Honduran transition to democracy was not the result of popular pressure or demands from below. Albeit relatively strong, the Honduran civil society did not play an important role in the initial phase

of the transition. By the late 1970s, there were only limited pressures for a transition to democracy. The transition was, as in El Salvador and Guatemala, initiated from above with only little involvement of civil society (Biekart 1999: 171). However, it was precisely the top-down nature of the transition that eventually mobilized the Honduran civil society. As a result of the democratic shortcomings, civil society organizations began to press for democratic reforms. Thus, the principal contribution of civil society was not in the initial phase of the transition in 1980-1982, but rather by the end of the 1980s and beginning of the 1990, during the Callejas and Reina administrations. It could be argued that Honduran civil society organizations thus contributed to a democratic orientation of the reforms (cf. Gill 2000).

It was particularly human rights organizations that successfully managed to put pressure on the government. In the 1980s, the human rights committee (CODEH) and the organization for the families of the detained and disappeared (COFADEH) were among the most visible civil society organizations (see e.g. Peckenham & Street 1985: 194-195; Salomón 1997b: 129). "During the 1980s, the Honduran human rights committee CODEH was the public face of the excluded opposition in Honduras" (Biekart 1999: 223). Some would even argue that it was in fact the opposition (ibid.). These two organizations denounced human rights violations that were committed by the security forces (Biekart 1999: 224). CODEH documented and denounced these violations to security forces, the American embassy and the judiciary. When nobody reacted, the human rights committee turned to international organizations. CODEH tried to speak out about the human rights violations at press conferences and through street protests, a weekly bulletin and advertisements in newspapers. As the organization became known, it received support from several foreign aid agencies. CODEH was built up by local committees that increased rapidly by the end of the 1980s. The committees were led by community leaders and lay-priests, so-called *celebradores de la palabra* (Biekart 1999: 225).

In addition, the Centro de Documentación de Honduras (CEDOH) and its secretary Victor Meza played an important role in the processes of spreading information (Acker 1988: 103-104). CEDOH emerged with the purpose of being an alternative source of information. In the 1980s the

founders realized that it was necessary to have an alternative source of information that could inform the international press, the public and international organizations (cs interviewee I). Another important civil society organization at the time was the Bar Association's (Colegio de Abogados) human rights committee (Acker 1988: 104). The committee consisted of eight elected members (all attorneys):

> The presence of such prominent Honduran leaders on the committee has played an important role in educating the bar and the public on the universal and nonpolitical character of human rights work (Americas Watch Committee 1987: 112).

The committee started to investigate the conditions in the prisons and reported the results to Americas Watch (Acker 1988: 104). Finally, Movimiento de Mujeres por la Paz "Vistación Padilla"—an organization that worked for peace, sovereignty of the Honduran territory and human rights—was founded in 1984 and played an important role in the 1980s. After 1986, women's rights were included in their work (Acker 1988: 104; Salomón et al. 1996a: 106; cs interviewee M). Visitación Padilla worked explicitly to put an end to the existence of foreign troops on Honduran territory.

Breaking the Silence

The main endeavors of civil society during the transition were to call attention to the human rights violations committed by the security forces, and to the impunity of the military. Particularly in the late stages of the transition, civil society had an important countervailing function. CODEH operated as the unofficial opposition during the 1980s. The committee offered legal and moral protection, and played the role of an independent pressure group:

> The major achievement of CODEH was that it managed to break the silence in Honduras about disappearances, political assassinations, torture, abuse of power by security forces and the absence of justice. More generally, it managed to reveal the shortcomings of the political and judicial system (Biekart 1999: 227).

One example of CODEH's activities is the case against the Honduran state, which was found responsible for the disappearances of Angel Manfredo Velásquez and Saúl Godínez by the Inter-American Court of Human Rights (Biekart 1999: 227-228). Velásquez and Godínez were trade union activists who disappeared after having been arrested by security forces. CODEH filed a petition with the Inter-American Court of Human Rights. This was the first case where the Inter-American Court of Human Rights found a government guilty of disappearances (Schultz & Sundloff-Schultz 1994: 245; Biekart 1999: 228).

Another example is the Riccy Mabel case (Biekart 1999:229). Mabel was a student who was found raped, tortured and murdered after visiting a military base. Mabel's classmates were convinced that the army base commander Colonel Castillo and other senior officers were involved in the murder. As a result, thousands of students marched in protest and demanded that the case be transferred to civilian authorities (Biekart 1999: 229; Schultz & Sundloff-Schultz 1994: 288). Initially, the military denied any involvement in the case, but after a few days one sergeant pleaded guilty. However, given the contradictions in his confession it soon became evident that he had been forced by his superiors to plead guilty in order to protect others. It was clear that senior military officers were involved, and the military tried to cover up (Biekart 1999: 229; Schultz & Sundloff-Schultz 1994: 288-289). Mabel's relatives then turned to CODEH for help. CODEH requested DNA tests of the officers. A civilian judge ordered the arrest of two high-ranking officers, but the FUSEP chief maintained that "a civilian judge had no jurisdiction over active military officers and that they would be tried by a military tribunal" (Biekart 1999: 230; Schultz & Sundloff-Schultz 1994: 289). Eventually, the new US ambassador Cresencio Arcos expressed his concern over the military's cover-up attempts. Finally, it was decided that there would be a combined civil-military investigation in which the FBI examined the DNA samples. Colonel Castillo was finally sentenced to 16 years and six months for murder and rape (Schultz & Sundloff-Schultz 1994: 290).

> The combination of an innocent female student from a poor family who was brutally raped and killed by military officers, and the awkward efforts by the armed forces to frustrate a transparent trial,

> turned the Riccy Mabel case into a symbol of the struggle against military impunity. Street protests in various cities by student, women's and human rights organisations to rally against impunity showed that the silent majority of civil society had lost its fear of the armed forces. The Honduran mass media were instrumental in the construction of a combative public opinion against military impunity by sustaining a constant stream of information on the trial and publishing every detail of new evidence provided by CODEH and the lawyer during press conferences (Biekart 1999: 230).

Thus, a vociferous civil society successfully put pressure on the Callejas administration to take action against human rights abuses and military impunity (Ruhl 1996: 45). Together with the new position of the American embassy and a bolder mass media, civil society played an important role in reducing the military's power in the late 1980s (Ruhl 1996: 45-46; Biekart 1999: 159). Student groups, labor unions, human rights organizations, business associations and the Catholic Church together joined a broad anti-military coalition (Ruhl 2000: 56).

This work was of course not appreciated in every sector. The human rights committee received several threats, and CODEH's president Ramón Custodio was the target of several assassination attempts (Schultz & Sundloff-Schultz 1994: 246). Custodio was disliked by both the North American and Honduran authorities. In a country report, the US State Department described CODEH as "an antidemocratic leftist organization" (Americas Watch Committee 1987: 121). Custodio was regarded as a hard-line communist. Indeed, Custodio's reports were very political and he adopted the propaganda of the radical left (Schultz & Sundloff-Schultz 1994: 246). A report published by CODEH in 1988 maintained that there had been 107 cases of "extrajudicial executions" in the previous year. However, as it turned out, Custodio had included other incidents that were not extrajudicial executions, e.g. personal vendettas and shoot-outs between the police and criminals. Custodio had obviously manipulated the data (Schultz & Sundloff-Schultz 1994: 247-248).[19] Custodio was discredited due to the manipulation of information, but still stands out as one of the most courageous defenders of human rights in the late 1980s. In 1988 the vice president of CODEH, Miguel Angel Pavón, was murdered

by a death squad (Biekart 1999: 228). Prior to the murder, posters with photographs of Custodio, Pavón and three labor leaders with a caption that said that these men were "terrorist delinquents" and "promoters of subversion" appeared in several cities around Honduras (Schultz & Sundloff-Schultz 1994: 226). CODEH accused the armed forces, the government and the American embassy of the murder of Pavón. And, the handling of the investigation clearly indicated an attempt to cover up (Schultz & Sundloff-Schultz 1994: 226).[20]

Thus, CODEH's role in the transition is perhaps best described as an actor that managed to break the silence and overcome the fear. The human rights committee was the main voice of the opposition. Other civil society organizations also engaged in the process to put an end to the impunity and militarization, such as women's and human rights organizations that arranged street protests. Mass media were also important in the fight against impunity, and printed all information provided by CODEH. This showed that civil society had lost its fear (Biekart 1999: 230; Salomón 1997b: 147). Civil society thus stood out as the defender of human rights.

CODEH's work was facilitated when Callejas appointed the National Commissioner for Protection of Human Rights in 1992, which gradually took over the tasks of CODEH (Biekart 1999: 211; Salomón et al. 1996a: 106). CODEH, during the 1980s, had made an enormous effort to make people aware of the human rights abuses, and was indispensable when a Human Rights Commissioner would have been impossible. CODEH's work contributed to a changed policy and the creation of a formal institution to deal with the human rights issues. Admittedly, it has also been argued Custodio felt that the creation of the Human Rights Commissioner threatened CODEH's role as the main voice within the opposition. Custodio reacted negatively when the Commissioner was installed and suggested that this was an attempt by the government to eliminate CODEH (Biekart 1999: 231).

Demands for a Reform of the Civil-Military Relations

In the late 1980s civil society stood out as a fierce critic of the civil-military relations in Honduras. The established political parties demonstrated

little willingness to alter the civil-military relations, or to put an end to human rights abuses and military impunity. The National Party traditionally had close relations to the military, and, after the transition, the Liberal Party developed a co-existence with the military and made a number of concessions. Against this background, civil society emerged as an important countervailing power with demands for reform of civil-military relations.

One crucial facet of the altered civil-military relations was the separation of the police force from the military and the creation of an independent system of investigation (e.g. 1996: 49). In the 1980s the military controlled the police forces, intelligence gathering and criminal investigation. This of course weakened the judicial system and contributed to the impunity of the military (Sieder & Costello 1996: 181). Foro Ciudadano emerged in September 1997 as a coalition of civil society organizations with the over-arching purpose of constructing democracy in the country, but the first project was to disconnect the police from the armed forces (Foro Ciudadano, *La ciudadanía pide la palabra*, 1999: 7).[21]

The Ad Hoc Commission had suggested a total abolition of DNI, and the creation of a new Division for Criminal Investigations (DIC), which would be placed under a Public Ministry, and President Reina had already during his electoral campaign demonstrated a political will to transfer the police from military to civilian control (Dunkerley & Sieder 1996: 75; Sieder & Costello 1996: 181).[22] In December 1996 the Congress ratified the transfer of the police to civilian authority. According to a report written by RDS-HN, one of the major obstacles in the process was the lack of political will to completely transform the police. The political powers were reluctant to open up spaces and listen to the suggestions of Foro Ciudadano. However, the umbrella organization still played an important role. The new Ley orgánica de la policía was implemented, and a mechanism for citizen control was actually included through the establishment of Consejo Nacional de Seguridad Interior (CONACIN), which was supposed to have five representatives from the government, one from the association of the municipalities (AMHON) and five representatives from civil society. CONACIN has an advisory and supervising function and is, among other things, supposed to guarantee the non-political character of the police and its respect for human rights. The council is also supposed

to ensure the articulation of citizen participation in formulating and implementing policies and strategies, and channeling assistance from civil society (RDS-HN, *El Foro Ciudadano y el traspaso de la policía al poder civil*, 1999).

Civil society organizations also played an important role in the reform of the military service (e.g. Salomón 1997b: 109-117). The civil society campaign for ending the mandatory military service began with a national meeting in the beginning of 1993 with representation from 55 civil society organizations. The meeting resulted in recommendations to reduce the military power, to increase the transparency and civilian control of the armed forces, to transform the mandatory military service into one that is based on voluntarism, and to limit the intervention of the armed forces in non-military issues (RDS-HN, *Derogación del servicio militar obligatorio en Honduras*, 1999). From this workshop, a committee made up of representatives from the Lutheran church, CODEH and Visitación Padilla was developed. The committee decided to focus on the voluntary military service. In May 1993, 139 persons from 39 organizations formed Movimiento Cívico Cristiano y Popular para la Derogación del Servicio Militar Obligatorio (MCCP). RDS-HN argues that even though the context was favorable, the decisive factor was these organizations' leadership and capacity for political action (RDS-HN, *Derogación del servicio militar obligatorio en Honduras*, 1999; see also Salomón 1997b: 109-117).

President Reina had announced that if he won the elections he would create a voluntary military service. From November and onwards, MCCP kept pressuring for placing the issue of voluntary military service on the political agenda. However, Reina's position became more ambiguous as the government was slow to send the proposed bill to the Congress. MCCP therefore intensified its attempts, and on April 27 the president announced that article 276 of the constitution should be reformed (RDS-HN, *Derogación del servicio militar obligatorio en Honduras*, 1999). MCCP's success can partly be explained by the support from COHEP (the private sector), which had supported the idea of a voluntary military service since 1992.[23] The alliance between MCCP and COHEP opened up new spaces for negotiation with the president and the Congress. The military argued in a massive campaign in the media that those who wanted to put an end to mandatory military service were traitors to their own

country. However, MCCP conducted surveys among the citizens, and it was obvious that a majority was against mandatory military service. MCCP used media, surveys, and public protests to deliver their message. Finally, the mandatory military service was replaced with a system based on voluntarism, which was an important part of the process of civilian control of the armed forces.[24] (RDS-HN, *Derogación del servicio militar obligatorio en Honduras*, 1999; Salomón 1998b: 123-126).

Summary

The transition to democracy was initiated in 1980. The main reasons for the decision to return to constitutional rule were a weak and divided military regime, in combination with US pressure for elections. The escalating crisis in the region turned Honduras into an important ally for the USA. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, there was only limited popular pressure for a transition to democracy and the transition is best described as a transition through transformation, i.e. a transition initiated and controlled by the military. Accordingly, the armed forces managed to keep their influence over the political sphere. The increased US influence clearly contributed to the persistent military power. But it was not only the armed forces that slowed down the transition to democracy. Civilian politicians like Suazo Córdova demonstrated little respect for democratic institutions. However, the increase of human rights violations in the 1980s eventually mobilized the Honduran civil society. It is noteworthy that it was not the workers' or peasants' movements that were mobilized. Instead, human rights organizations emerged as a new force in Honduran civil society, as a reaction to the deteriorating human rights situation.

With our definition of democracy, the transition was finally completed in the late-1990s, when the military was subordinated to civilian authority. This was partly a result of civil society's pressure for an improved human rights situation. Thus, civil society was an important actor that managed to direct the transition onto a more democratic track. It has been argued that an elite-controlled transition to democracy is preferable to a mass-controlled transition and that pact making brings stability to the new democracy. The Honduran transition illustrates that including the

military in the pact making might be hazardous for the new democracy, as the military managed to retain its privileges and prerogatives. Yet many problems were left to be solved. Let us turn to the more subtle democratic deficits of post-transition Honduras.

Notes

1 Anderson states that Frente Morazanista para la Liberación de Honduras (FMLH) had planned to begin their operations as soon as the manipulated elections were over (1988: 146).

2 Some of the literature discusses the transition and the triggering causes of that transition. See e.g. Anderson (1988); Ruhl (2000); Lindenberg (1997); Sieder (1996a); Biekart (1999). However, a substantial part of the literature emphasizes the post-transition political developments.

3 The land reform had slowed down, but Paz maintained that there was no slow down of the agrarian reform. This caused anger among the peasant organizations that started to occupy land, and in 1978, about 400 peasants were jailed. It was revealed that the leader of ANACH (the pro-democratic peasant organization) was a personal friend of Paz (Anderson 1988: 143-144).

4 See Jorge I. Domínguez (1997) for a discussion of the Carter administration's policies in favor of human rights and democratization in the Central American region.

5 For a more detailed description of the involvement of the CIA in the Central American conflict, see Schultz & Sundloff-Schultz (1994).

6 See Acker (1988: 115) for the same argument.

7 The first big maneuver—Big Pine I — began in February 1983. Big Pine I was followed by the larger Big Pine II in the summer of 1983 (see e.g. Anderson 1988: 158; Lapper 1985: 88). Big Pine III took place in February to May 1985, Cabañas 85 from June to September 1985, and Terencio Sierra from March to May 1986 (Dunkerley 1988: 572).

8 See Salomón (1985) and (1992) for a detailed analysis of the national security doctrine in Honduras.

9 Alvarez also set up a Centre for Emergency Information and so-called civil defence committees. Their function was to spy on neighbors and to report "unusual activities" to the police or army (Lapper 1985: 95). For an overview of the human rights violations in the 1980s see Amnesty International (1988).

10 The most important insurgency groups were: Frente Morazanista para la Liberación de Honduras (FMLH), Movimiento Popular de Liberación Cinchoneros (MPLC) and Fuerzas Populares Revolucionarias Lorenzo Zelaya (FPR-LZ) (Ruhl 2000: 53).

11 The consequence, however, was a pact for the forthcoming election. The compromise, according to Sieder, was "brokered by the two key extra-governmental actors, the armed

forces and the US Embassy" (1996a: 27). As a result, a new electoral law was passed that allowed every party faction to have their own candidate, which in practice meant that primaries and presidential elections took place simultaneously. The winner of the presidency was the candidate who received the highest total number of votes (Sieder 1996a: 27-28; see also Anderson 1988: 161-162).

12 Actually, the National Party's candidate, Rafael Callejas, received more votes than Azcona de Hoyo, but due to the new electoral law it was the total sum of votes for the party that decided who would become president. "The pact and the outcome of the elections led to a complicated system of alliances and significantly contributed to the accelerated factionalism and division of the two main parties" (Sieder 1996a: 28). As a consequence, Azcona had to form alliances with the National Party. The National Party gained a strong influence over the TNE (Sieder 1996a: 28-29).

13 The Esquipulas agreement encouraged open dialogues with unarmed opposition groups and cease-fires in the guerrilla wars. It included a prohibition of outside aid to insurgents. It required internal democratization with lifting of censorship, freedom of press etc. (see Schultz & Sundloff-Schultz 1994: 179).

14 Callejas won with 51 percent over Carlos Flores Facussé from the Liberal Party (43 percent) (Ruhl 2000: 56).

15 In an interim report by the National Commissioner for Human Rights, Valladares describes the efforts made to obtain human rights information from the US and Argentinian governments (Comisionado Nacional de los Derechos Humanos, *In Search of Hidden Truths*, 1998).

16 See Salomón (1998b) for a detailed discussion of the reform suggestions by the Ad Hoc Commission.

17 Schultz and Sundloff-Schultz argue in the concluding chapter of their volume from 1994 that the nomination of Ramos Soto posed great uncertainty to the future of democracy (1994: 327).

18 However, the military was still in control of the Instituto de Previsión Militar, which is one of Honduras' major financial groups that is in control of a bank (BANFAA), an insurance company (PREVISA) and a credit card company (PREVICARD) (Ruhl 2000: 58; Rosenberg & Ruhl 1996: 75).

19 For a discussion of Custodio's (mis)management of the CODEH, see Chapter Nine.

20 Evidence disappeared, witnesses changed their testimony and the police were unwilling to cooperate (Schultz & Sundloff-Scultz 1994: 226).

21 Among the groups that participated in the campaign were: Comisionado Nacional de los Derechos Humanos, CEDOH, Fundación Democracia y Desarollo (FDDH), CGT, CTH, COCOCH, CODEH, Asociación de Docentes de la Universidad Nacional (ADUNAH), Universidad para la Paz, ASONOG, Federación de Colegios Profesionales de Honduras (FECOPRUH), COFADEH, Comité Vistitación Padilla, Comité Civico Cristiano Popular and CIPRODEH (RDS-HN, *El Foro Ciudadano y el traspaso de la policía al poder civil*, 1999).

22 The Public Ministry, which is the office of the public prosecutor, was created in 1993. The Public Ministry covers different areas, such as the Public Prosecutor's office, the Human Rights Prosecutor's office and an anti-narcotics office (Sieder & Costello 1996: 178). The

Public Ministry has been receiving citizens' complaints over law-breaking, crime, violence, corruption, abuses and disappearances. There is, for example, a special prosecutor for women that have been abused. Before the Public Ministry was established, violence against women in their homes, rarely led to prosecutions. According to Salomón, the citizens have considerable trust in this institution and believe that it defends their interests. (1998a: 50-51).

23 The private sector was disgruntled with the social and economic influence of the military (see e.g. Rosenberg & Ruhl 1996).

24 After the constitution was changed there have been attempts to return to mandatory military service from some members of the armed forces and the National Party. It has been argued that it is necessary to combat the rising delinquency (RDS-HN, *Derogación del servicio militar obligatorio en Honduras*, 1999).

Chapter Eight

Post-Transitional Challenges Political Institutionalization, Performance and Legitimacy

> Personalism and clientelism characterize Honduran politics. Both military and civilian groups have had difficulty adapting to democracy. Civilians have shown as much or greater resistance to responsible government as has the military (Rosenberg 1995: 67).

The Honduran transition to democracy was completed in the late 1990s when the military finally came under civilian control. As a newly established democracy, Honduras faces the challenge of moving forward towards a well-functioning political system that is perceived as legitimate among both the political elite and the broader mass public (cf. Diamond 1999: 64). This chapter is concerned with the Honduran post-transition setting, with special focus on the difficulties related to political institutionalization, regime performance and legitimacy for the democratic regime.

It is no longer the military that poses the greatest threat to Honduras' democratic future, but rather the elected civilian politicians' predilection for clientelism and patrimonialism and for an arbitrary exercise of power. In combination with a weak rule of law and weak horizontal accountability, this clearly poses a challenge to the new fragile democracy. An analysis of the post-transition period therefore requires a shift from the military's tutelary powers or reserved domains, to issues of weakness in the rule of law, the weakness of public accountability, the low legitimacy or the low commitment to democracy (see e.g. Diamond et al. 1999: 1-10). The picture of post-transition Honduras is quite gloomy. This chapter illustrates the absence of successful institutionalization of political society. The executive still controls supposedly neutral institutions such as the judiciary and the Electoral Tribunal. In addition, traditions of patrimonialism

and clientelism within the political parties and public administration are persistent and not easily removed. Low regime performance—political or economic—may result in an erosion of trust and a declining legitimacy for the democratic system. As a result, then, the country could easily be caught up in a vicious circle of low efficiency and low legitimacy.

Weak Political Institutionalization

For a fragile democracy to develop into an effectively functioning democratic system, one that is perceived as legitimate by the citizens, political institutionalization is critical. Three aspects of political institutionalization are here considered as particularly important: rule of law and horizontal accountability, well-functioning institutions of governance and an efficient and transparent public administration. Overall, the Honduran political society is best described as weak, with little routinization or institutionalization. Against this background, the main threat to democracy in Honduras no longer seems to be a military coup, but rather the weaknesses of political institutions and civilian politicians' disrespect of democratic rules, which eventually may erode public support.

Weak Horizontal Accountability

The politicization of allegedly neutral institutions is a phenomenon that is deeply anchored in Honduran political society. Politicization of neutral institutions indicates absence of horizontal accountability. Horizontal accountability, or the power of one branch of government to control potential abuses committed by other branches of government, is a crucial element in a democratic system (e.g. Diamond et al. 1999: 3). In Honduras, the endemic politicization is a result of the traditional spoils system, i.e. the behavior among politicians to treat neutral political or administrative institutions as something that they have gained control of. In the traditional spoils system, winning an election meant gaining the right to control the recruitment process to certain institutions. As a consequence, *personalismo* was widespread in the administrative process. This has clearly contributed to administrative inefficiency (Stokes 1950: 191-193). In the Honduran political society, the spoils system affects several institutions and

processes. Politicians, like the first democratically elected president, are involved in constant struggles for patronage (*chamba*) for their supporters, and this ambition is sometimes more important than improving the performance of the government (Ruhl 2000: 54; see also Taylor 1996).

One of the major democratic deficits in Latin America after the political transformations in the past two decades is the delegative nature of democracy. This refers to the concentration of the executive power to a few individuals at the expense of horizontal and vertical accountability (Ciurlizza 2000; O'Donnell 1996a). Honduran democracy clearly has such a delegative touch. The judicial system is an example of a supposedly neutral institution that is dominated by the executive branch. As a result, the judicial system is seriously weakened (see Sieder & Costello 1996: 171). Formally, judiciaries are independent branches. But in many Latin American countries, Javier Ciurlizza argues, they are:

> usually linked with the executive power by more than just formal mechanisms of co-operation. There is no strong tradition of real independence of judges and prosecutors in respect of political decisions taken by the President [...] Thus a poor record in terms of failing to demonstrate efficiency, impartiality, honesty and other vital qualities has led not just to low levels of public confidence but to a certain lack of self-esteem among the judges themselves (Ciurlizza 2001: 217-218).[1]

The judicial system is particularly sensitive to such politicization and absence of horizontal accountability, because it could prevent punishment of abuses committed by politicians or civil servants, for example. Only an independent, transparent and effective judicial system could apply sanctions against corrupt politicians or state officials.

The judicial branch of government has always been the weakest branch in Honduras, as it is controlled by the executive power. The military's disrespect of the rule of law and human rights in the 1980s, in combination with the passiveness of the civilian politicians to deal with the abuses, posed a great challenge to an independent judicial system. The situation worsened in the 1990s, with obstructions to impart justice, with high levels of corruption and with partisan involvement in the judicial administration (Romero & Salomón 2000: 7). Hence the judicial system is a part

of the state apparatus that clearly has been circumscribed by the spoils system (see e.g. Salomón 1997a: 22-23):

> The tradition of dividing up judicial posts as public spoils between and within political parties has been particularly explicit in Honduras, facilitated in part by the relative stability of a bipartisan political system and the predominance of patronage mechanisms throughout society (Sieder & Costello 1996: 175).

Political considerations have traditionally been more important than merit-based appointments for promotions within the judiciary (Sieder & Costello 1996: 175; Stokes 1950: 192-198). Supreme Court magistrates were selected for four years by simple congressional majority, and every new government appointed a Supreme Court that would share the beliefs of the government. However, since 1993 there have been demands for a judicial reform that would include a different nomination process and a two-thirds majority for the selection of magistrates (see Chapter Nine for a detailed discussion). This reform could reduce the political influence over the judiciary (Sieder & Costello 1996: 175-176). In the same vein, Ramón Romero & Leticia Salomón (2000) argue that judicial reform is necessary to confront the corruption, impunity, citizen insecurity, the weak credibility of the system and the weak rule of law.

A particularly problematic case of politicization is the National Electoral Tribunal (TNE). The positions at TNE are filled with representatives from the political parties, with one exception—one representative is from the Supreme Court. However, the representative from the Supreme Court is most likely to be appointed by the government. Thus, the ruling party is likely to be in control of the Electoral Tribunal, and this politicization clearly poses a problem of democracy as the ruling party could use this influence to interfere in the electoral process. The ruling party's control over TNE became evident in late 1984, when President Suazo Córdova's *continuista* intentions provoked a constitutional crisis, with conflicts between the Congress and the TNE, which was in Suazo's control (Sieder 1996a: 27; Ruhl 2000: 54). The absence of an independent Electoral Tribunal and the potential for manipulation of the electoral process can also cause an erosion

of trust and respect for the democratic system among the citizens (Salomón 1997a: 18-19).

In 1950 William S. Stokes noted that the legacy of colonial rule with traditions of *personalismo*, *caudillismo* and *continuismo* remained strong in the Honduran political sphere (Stokes 1950: 294-300). Stokes' observation seems to fit well to the Honduran post-transition situation. This is particularly visible in the delegative nature of democracy and the weak and inefficient judicial power. As a result, the rule of law is weakened.

Caudillo-Controlled Parties

Another part of political society that is still affected by the legacy of colonialism is the party system. Five political parties participate in the electoral process in Honduras: Partido Nacional de Honduras (PN) and Partido Liberal de Honduras (PL), the Socialist Partido de Innovación y Unidad (PINU), Partido Demócrata Cristiano de Honduras (PDCH) and the most recent leftist addition, the Partido de Unificación Democrática (PUD). However, in practice the Honduran party system is a bipartisan one with two dominant parties: the Liberal and the National Party. Both parties date back to the end of the 19th century, when they emerged as a response to the classic Latin American conflict between Conservatives and Liberals over issues such as the Church (Woodward 1984). Stokes argues, however, that even though this division was important following independence, the parties soon developed into caudillo-controlled factions, and issues were personal rather than ideological. Traditions of *personalismo* and *caudillismo* have continued to dominate the parties in the 20th century (Stokes 1950: 206-227; see Taylor 1996 for the same argument). The two parties, often referred to as the traditional parties, are best described as electoral machines rather than political parties with clear ideological visions. The traditional parties are highly fractionalized:

> Both parties are characterized by clientelist networks and traditions of internal coalition-building and intra-party competition, resulting in a situation where the macro-stability of the bipartisan framework coexists with the micro-instability of party infighting and division (Sieder 1996a: 20).

The two traditional political parties are often described as old-fashioned organizations with undemocratic internal structures (Salomón 1998a: 20-25). Until recently, political candidates were selected by non-democratic means. The selection process has been described as based on juggling and skill, or as a gentlemen's agreement. Only a few persons were involved in the process—*selección de dedo*—and there were no signs of pluralism. Consequently, it has been described as a system of *dedocracia* rather than *democracia* (Salomón 1998a: 21; Salomón 1997a: 52).

The internal democracy of the two dominant political parties has improved following the transition to democracy, but it has been a slow process. The Liberal Party has been a predecessor in this regard. The National Party, which has been more resistant to democratization, started to democratize its internal elections by 1992, when both Nora Gúnera de Melgar and Ramos Soto wanted to run for the National Party in the presidential election. This reform was finally implemented in December 1996, but the attempt to democratize the party structures met with opposition and problems (Salomón 1998a: 20-25). Leticia Salomón argues that in contrast to the National Party, which has a high degree of modernization but a low degree of democracy, the Liberal Party has a high degree of democracy but a low degree of modernization (1997a: 52; see also Schultz & Sundloff-Schultz 1994: 271). However, running election campaigns is a costly business, and internal elections are in practice a question of who can raise money to finance a campaign. It has, against this background, been argued that corruption prevails within the political parties and that this can cause a loss of credibility for the political parties (Salomón 1998a: 61-62; cs interviewee F; cs interviewee I).

Clientelism, patrimonialism and other informal practices are persistent within the political system and the political parties (Salomón 1998a: 29-36; Taylor 1996). Traditionally, people vote for the candidates who offer most benefits to their community, and that is how patronage prevails (Acker 1988: 73; Salomón 1997a: 26-27). One example was President Suazo Córdova's decision to place 11 of the country's 15 road tractors in his small hometown La Paz, and to build a soccer stadium (worth US$ 1.5 million) even though La Paz did not even have a soccer team (Acker 1988: 73). The two traditional parties continue to dominate the political scene. Since the transition to democracy, they have together received around 90

to 95 percent of the votes in every election.[2] It is often argued that the traditional parties are not representative of the people at large (e.g. Acker 1988: 73; cs interviewee T), and for an outsider it may seem paradoxical that two parties that represent the elite continue to receive a great majority of the votes in a country where the majority is made up of poor peasants. Elvia Alvarado explains the persistently strong position of the traditional parties:

> The two main parties, the Liberals and the Nationalists (or the *cachurecos*, as we call them, the conservatives) are the same crap. They're full of corrupt politicians who just want to get rich quick. There's no difference between the two parties, they just trade off every few years to make it look democratic. Everybody in Honduras votes. Here the people love to vote, they stand in long lines to vote. Election day is a big holiday. But why? Because the people are so excited about the candidates? No. Because on election day the politicians kill a bunch of cows and give away lots of food, lots of meat. For many people it's one of their only chances to eat meat. In this last election there were four parties running—the Liberals and the Nationalists, and then two smaller parties, the Christian Democrats and the PINU (Innovation and Unity Party). They all set up their booths with food, but the Liberals and the Nationalists are the richest so they have the best spread […] So election day is a great feast for the campesinos. But little do they know how much that bit of meat really costs them (Alvarado 1987: 120-121).

The persistent dominance of the traditional parties is partly a result of clientelist control of poor voters. This subtle version of vote buying is likely to take place in countries with high socioeconomic inequality and widespread poverty (Schedler 2002: 44). Traditionally, the candidates bring food to the poor neighborhoods, and as the two traditional parties have considerable financial resources, they can invest more in their electoral campaigns than can the small parties. This is why the small parties have few voters from the poor (ps interviewee G; cs interviewee Ab). Another reason for the continued dominance of the traditional parties is that people often vote according to habit (cs interviewee Q). The lack of education, critical thinking, and awareness explains the dominance of the traditional parties and why campesinos vote for the landowners (m/a interviewee B):

> You ask poor Hondurans why they vote for the Nationalist Party and they'll say, 'Oh, because my grandfather and my great grandfather were Nationalists. I was born a Nationalist.' The same with the Liberals—their mothers, their fathers, their grandfathers were Liberals, so they are too. So we're really the ones to blame, because we vote for these parties. We're the majority in this country. We're the ones that put these corrupt politicians in power. Because most of the poor are still ignorant and continue to vote for the traditional parties (Alvarado 1987: 121).

As a consequence of the bipartisanism and the character of the traditional parties there is no real opposition in Honduras (Salomón 1998a: 40-41). There is almost no ideological difference between the Liberal Party and the National Party and the tendency is that they are becoming even more alike. Given that that two traditional parties function mainly as electoral machines, their activities are reduced immediately after the elections (Rosenberg & Ruhl 1996: 64; Salomón 1998a: 41-42). And, without a clear political agenda, it is hard to be a strident party in opposition. There are of course the new political parties—PINU, PDCH and PUD—that could pose a challenge to the traditional parties. However, without considerable financial resources it is impossible to engage in political campaigning, and as the economic power is concentrated in the traditional parties, the new parties face serious obstacles.

Honduran-Style Elections

Since the transition to democracy was initiated with the elections to a Constituent Assembly in 1980, six general elections have been held in Honduras. The quality of the elections has been debated. According to Salomón, the "Honduran-style" elections are characterized by fraud, political trips, lack of respect for those with opposing views, absence of pluralism and lack of internal democracy (1998a: 5; 1997a: 56-58). One such democratic deficit that clearly weakens the electoral process is the lack of autonomy of the Registro Nacional de las Personas (RNP). RNP is the official record of residents and has, since its creation 1980, been

subordinated to the Electoral Tribunal. As TNE is one of the institutions that are subject to politicization, there is a fear that the dominating political parties will manipulate RNP. Rumors about inscription of minors and foreigners, about identity cards that have never been delivered, about emission of identity cards without fingerprints and about false cards to people from Asia have circulated. There have also been cases of people getting in to the computers and "moving" citizens from one community to another. The political parties have accused each other of the mismanagement of RNP, and Salomón argues that the parties want to keep the system because it gives them more control over the electoral process. The manipulation of RNP could provoke a real credibility crisis for the electoral process (Salomón 1997a: 61-65; Salomón 1998a: 36-40).

There have been reforms of the electoral process. Prior to 1993, mayors and deputies were elected based on the percentage of votes that the presidential candidate received. However, in 1993 a reform of the electoral law stated that there would be separate elections for municipal authorities (*alcaldes*). Members of the Congress were still elected based on the outcome of the presidential election. With the reform, voters could vote for a Liberal candidate for mayor and a Nationalist for president. The electoral reform increased municipal autonomy and made the mayors more accountable to the voters. This reform also improved the chances for the smaller parties to gain municipal representation. However, the vote for president and mayor was on the same ballot-paper, something that created confusion. The voters, according to Salomón, were not sufficiently informed about the reform. The traditional parties resisted separate ballot papers, probably because they feared the competition at the municipal level (Salomón 1997a: 65-69). In 1993 the Congress passed a reform that implied separate ballots for the president and deputies, beginning in the 1997 elections (Taylor 1996: 336). Thus, in 1997 there were separate ballots for president, deputies and mayors, and the voters could split their votes if they wanted.

Another electoral reform that has been implemented in order to improve participation in the elections was the new electoral law that made it possible for citizens to vote where they reside. Prior to the reform, voters had to go to their place of birth or to the place where they were registered to cast their vote, and the political parties provided means of transporta-

tion to the voting station. Control over transportation gave the political parties an opportunity to influence the voters. The governing party had greater possibilities to control transportation and, accordingly, in the electoral processes 1985 and 1989 the Liberals resisted the reform, and initially the Nationalists also resisted the reform in 1993 (Salomón 1997a: 65-66). However, the reform was eventually implemented and, as a result, people can vote where they reside and are no longer dependent on transport to the polling stations where they are registered (Salmón 1998a: 59).

One problem regarding the electoral process concerns the electoral propaganda, and more specifically, the duration and extent of the electoral campaigns. A 1991 law states that campaigning should be restricted to four months before the primary elections and six months before the general elections (Salomón 1997a: 58-61). Still, it feels as though there is always an electoral campaign going on in Honduras; almost immediately after a new government is inaugurated campaigning begins anew (cs interviewee S). The importance of the propaganda turns electoral campaigning into a question of how much money candidates can spend on their campaigns (Salomón 1998a: 61-62; Salomón 1997a: 79-136). Political campaigning raises the issue of the financing. There have been accusations that the parties are unable to control their funding. People suspect that corruption and drug trafficking finance the electoral campaigns (Salomón 1998a: 62). Long-lasting electoral campaigns imply that there will be considerable costs involved and, consequently, the risk of illegal payoffs increases (Rose-Ackerman 2000: 138-140). The electoral process is clearly not sufficiently transparent, and this could cause an erosion of legitimacy for the democratic system. Salomón argues that there is a mentality of fraud that threatens to paralyze the whole political system (1997a: 58-61).

Patronage Politics

A more intangible democratic deficit is the deeply rooted traditions of clientelism and other authoritarian traditions that characterize Honduran society. Clientelism constitutes a grave problem that seriously undermines the efficiency of the institutions of governance and public administration (e.g.

Sieder 1996a: 20). The clients could, for example, be campaign organizers who, in exchange for their work, receive an import-export license or a position in the public administration. Clientelistic traditions are deeply rooted in Honduran society (Salomón 1998a: 29-39; see also Taylor 1996). Another example of the authoritarian traditions is the patrimonial vision of the state, which refers to the widespread belief that one could use the state as if it was a personal belonging (Salomón 1998a: 35). The patrimonial character of the state thus refers to the tendency to recognize the state as somebody's—often civil servants, the presidential family, or other elected persons'—property. This habit is consequently a source of nepotism and corruption. Patrimonialism has been institutionalized, has survived the transition to civilian rule and has been incorporated into the political culture (Salomón 1998a: 35). A long tradition of verticalism in decision-making and management of public affairs has not disappeared with the transition to democracy. Together, clientelism, patrimonialism and verticalism undermine transparency and, consequently, accountability (Consultative group, *Civil Society: Participation and Transparency in Central America*, 1999).

Corruption is a serious problem in Honduras. Leticia Salomón, Julieta Castellanos & Dora Castillo describe the situation as if there is a culture of corruption (1996b: 5). Corruption is widespread within the public administration in post-transition Honduras (Salomón 1997a: 35; see also Salomón et al. 1996b).[3] In Transparency International's corruption perception index (CPI) 2001, Honduras ranks as number 71 out of 91 listed countries, together with India, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan (Transparency International, *The Corruption Perception Index,* 2001).[4] As Salomón argues, political activity is often seen as a business deal, where the rule of thumb is to gain as much as possible. This tradition has certainly made the prestige of politicians decline in the eyes of the population. Most citizens perceive politicians as persons who seek to satisfy their personal gain rather than to work for the benefit of the citizens (Salomón 1998a: 29-36). For example, in President Suazo's administration there were over a hundred publicly identified cases of corruption, and the President himself was deeply involved (Schultz & Sundloff-Schultz 1994: 202). Another corruption case was President Callejas' involvement in the so-

called "Chinazo"—the illegal sale of Honduran passports to Hong Kong residents (*La Prensa* 09.07.96; 10.07.96; 18.03.97). However, corruption is not restricted to the political sphere, but widespread within the private sector as well, and CONADI (Corporación Nacional de Desarrollo Industrial) is a case in point. CONADI provided loans to private investors in order to support the national industrial sector. However, incompetent and corrupt administration violated lending rules, and loans provided without adequate documentation soon resulted in bankruptcy (Schultz & Sundloff-Schultz 1994: 203-204; Acker 1988: 73). But corruption is not restricted to the political community, the business sector and the military, but exists in every segment of society (Schultz & Sundloff-Schultz 1994: 204-205).[5]

These informal practices of clientelism and patrimonialism are deeply anchored in Honduran society, and not easily altered. Contextual factors such as poverty and low civil service salaries, bureaucratic traditions and weak institutions tend to generate corruption. These informal practices are clearly a threat to a functioning democracy, as it tends to violate public trust and erode the legitimacy of the democratic system (Consultative group, *The Fight Against Corruption. A World Bank Perspective*, 1999). When the horizontal accountability is weak, an independent mass media can play an important role by calling attention to corruption within the political sphere (e.g. Rose-Ackerman 2000: 165-167). The mass media in Honduras has traditionally been relatively unrestricted. However, during President Flores' tenure, the mass media's freedom has been restricted (cs interviewee V; cs interviewee Ab; ps interviewee C; m/a interviewee B). One problem concerns the oligopoly in the media sphere. TV-channels, radio stations and newspapers are owned by a few media groups (cs interviewee V; ps interviewee C; m/a interviewee B). While this problem is not unusual, or even typical of new democracies, the fact that ex-President Flores and his family are one of the major owners of several media groups certainly poses a delicate problem. Flores' family owns the daily newspaper *La Tribuna*. Flores also owns radio stations and a TV-channel (cs interviewee V). Flores has—in a subtle way—restricted mass media and the journalists' freedom of expression (cs interviewee Ab; cs interviewee V). This has also raised the question of objective news coverage and distribution (ps interviewee C). Hence the problems of

corruption and weak horizontal accountability are accentuated with a mass media that is unable to exercise its freedom of expression.

The weak horizontal accountability and the politicization of supposedly neutral institutions, such as the judiciary and particularly the Electoral Tribunal, indicate a weak political institutionalization. In addition, irregularities in the electoral process and authoritarian leftovers such as clientelism and patrimonialism within both institutions of governance and the administrative sphere are symptoms of weak political institutionalization. This lack of well-functioning political institutions and processes can affect the new democratic regime's performance negatively. Clientelism and patrimonialism clearly undermine an efficient use of public resources and efficient decision-making and implementation of public policies. A weak judiciary, and one controlled by the executive, accentuates the problem, as an independent and efficient judicial power is necessary to deal with corruption cases within the political or administrative sphere. Stronger and more transparent institutions are clearly important for improved regime performance.

Regime Performance and Legitimacy

Regime performance, or the capacity of the regime to deliver what the citizens expect and desire, is likely to contribute to improved perceived legitimacy of the regime. Legitimacy is here seen as a form of support for the regime, or as the belief that the existing political system is the most appropriate one (Lipset 1959). Specific support is a specific response to the policies implemented by the government, when the demands of the citizens are being fulfilled, and diffused support refers to a more general support for the regime as a principle (Easton 1965: 268-269). We have already briefly touched upon regime performance when we discussed how lack of institutionalization of political society affected the management of public resources negatively and obstructed effective decision-making and implementation of public policies. Let us now consider the economic performance in the post-transition period and how it has affected the perceived legitimacy of the democratic regime. Economic performance is an example of regime performance that is normally considered as important by most citizens as it clearly affects their daily life.

Economic Performance

Honduras ranks among the lowest-income countries in Latin America, together with Nicaragua, Bolivia and Guyana, with low social indicators and a high foreign debt (World Bank, *World Development Indicators*, 2002). The economic situation by the time of transition was bad, with falling prices for coffee and bananas. Prices and unemployment were rising, and production was falling (Acker 1988: 127). The transition to democracy did not improve the economic situation—Honduras remained one of the poorest countries in Latin America, and in the Central American region only Nicaragua was poorer. The social deficit was serious even before hurricane Mitch; 70 percent of the population was considered poor. Around 40 percent did not have access to drinkable water, and 30 percent of the adult population did not know how to read or write (Consultative group, *Civil Society: Participation and Transparency in Central America*, 1999).

In 1997, the economy was recovering from the crisis in the 1980s, with a GDP growth of 4.9 percent, with falling inflation and with a manageable balance of payments deficit. But then hurricane Mitch struck in late October 1998 (World Bank, *Honduras. Country Brief*, 1999). The World Bank and bilateral donors have oriented their assistance since the disaster to emergency rehabilitation and reconstruction activities, and the economy is slowly recovering. In the year 2001, GNI per capita was US$ 900 (World Bank, *World Development Indicators*, 2002).[6] Still, about two thirds of the families live below the poverty line, and about 50 percent of the families live below the extreme poverty line (World Bank, *Honduras: Public Expenditure Management for Poverty Reduction and Fiscal Sustainability*, 2001). The foreign debt in 1999 was US$ 3,645 million (Consultative group, *Honduras—Recent Economic Developments,* 2000). In July 2000, the World Bank and IMF agreed to support a debt reduction package for Honduras within the HIPC Initiative (debt initiative for heavily indebted poor countries). As part of the HIPC program, the government has to write a so-called Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP), which is supposed to guide policy priorities (World Bank, *Honduras. Public Expenditure Management for Poverty Reduction and Fiscal Sustainability*, 2001).[7] Honduras' PRSP was accepted by the World Bank and IMF in October 2001 (Sida, *Utvecklingssamarbetet med Honduras*,

2002). In sum, then, economic performance since the transition to democracy has been low. Even though the economy is recovering, poverty is still widespread, and social indicators are among the lowest in Latin America.

It is, against this background, not very surprising that a majority of the Hondurans, according to the Latinobarómetro, consider the economic situation to be bad or very bad.[8] In 1996, nine out of ten Hondurans considered the economic situation to be deteriorating. Moreover, the Hondurans showed most pessimism as regards the economic situation in the whole region; 77 percent of the respondents believed that within a year the situation was going to be worse. When asked about the actual economic situation for their family, 65 percent of Hondurans found it to be worse than a year ago. Concerning the future, 59 percent of Hondurans thought that the economic situation for the family would get worse. Honduras revealed the highest figures in the region. Finally, a majority (83 percent) believed that the economic system only gave opportunities for the rich and not for the poor (PNUD, *El desafío democrático*, 1997). In sum, in the eyes of the poor majority in Honduras the government has not performed well, and this can contribute to a declining legitimacy for the democratic regime. How, then, does regime performance affect the perceived legitimacy of the regime?

Attitudinal Support

Measuring attitudes certainly poses a great methodological challenge.[9] One way to approach attitudes concerning democracy among the mass public in Honduras is through the Latinobarómetro. Perhaps the most striking finding is the improvement in the support for democracy in the 1990s. In an article in 1997, Marta Lagos, founding director of the Latinobarómetro, wrote that according to the survey of 1996, the Hondurans' support for democracy was the lowest in Latin America—only 42 percent agreed with the statement "democracy is preferable to any other kind of government". This figure can be compared with 80 percent in Costa Rica, 59 percent in Nicaragua, 56 percent in El Salvador and 51 percent in Guatemala (1997: 132). While it is no surprise that Costa Rica was doing better in this regard, it is interesting to note that Honduras

showed a lower degree of support compared to its neighbors. Concerning satisfaction with democracy, Honduras was also found at the bottom—only Guatemalans showed less satisfaction with democracy. In Honduras, only 20 percent were very or fairly satisfied with democracy. In Costa Rica, 51 percent were satisfied, as compared to 23 percent in Nicaragua and 26 percent in El Salvador. Only 16 percent were satisfied in Guatemala (Lagos 1997). However, if we turn to the Latinobarómetro in 2000, the Hondurans' support for democracy had increased from 42 percent in 1996, to 57 percent in 1998, and to 64 percent in the year 2000 (Lagos 2001). In fact, Honduras had the largest increase in support for democracy of all Central American republics.[10]

Given the methodological difficulties involved in surveys, it is important to avoid too definite conclusions. Nonetheless, it is possible that the democratic reforms implemented by President Reina and President Flores in the 1990s, that finally placed the military under civilian authority, can have contributed to increased support for democracy. It would then be a specific support for democracy, a response to the democracy-strengthening policies implemented by the Reina and Flores administrations. However, one could also assume that people have begun to see democracy as legitimate *per se*, i.e. a form of diffuse support for democracy as a principle. Given the limitations of a survey like the Latinobarómetro, we are not in a position to examine whether it is a specific or a diffuse support.

Behavioral Compliance

Behavioral compliance with the democratic rules is a sign of support for the democratic system. In post-transition Honduras there have been no signs of transgression of authority. Suazo's attempt to intervene in the democratic process could, of course, be interpreted as a sign of transgression of authority. However, the Congress managed to put an end to this. Apart from this event, there have been no *autogolpes*, such as in Guatemala or Peru, where the elected executive suspended the legislatures and constitution and concentrated the power on himself (cf. Schedler 2001: 70-71; Huntington 1997: 9; Diamond 1997: xxi). The level of political violence is low in post-transition Honduras, but there have been political

murders. Only a few days before the elections of 2001, for example, one of the National Party's candidates for Congress was murdered (*La Prensa* 25.11.01).

The elections in the post-transition period have been fairly clean, and the most recent election (2001) was considered as a democratic success (*La Tribuna* 26.11.01; Sida, *Utvecklingssamarbetet med Honduras,* 2001). There are no major political parties or insurgent movements that challenge the democratic system or try to use non-democratic means to achieve their goals. Yet, there are aspects of the electoral process that have made Salomón refer to the elections as "Honduran-style elections" (1998a: 5). The political influence over RNP and clientelist control of poor voters are examples of how politicians sometimes seem to lack respect for the electoral process (Salomón 1998a: 5; Salomón 1997a: 56-58). The problems of behavioral compliance are of a subtle character; for example, elected politicians' patrimonial styles of ruling (cf. Diamond 1997: xxi). Part of the political elite is too busy creating patronage for themselves or dividing the spoils among them to comply with the rules of democracy. This behavior of the political elite is clearly not conducive to democratic development. Mark J. Ruhl argues that there must be a change of attitudes among the political elite:

> Elected officials would have to concentrate more on policy making than on *chamba*. They would also have to be ready to be held accountable for their actions by a stronger and more independent judiciary (Ruhl 2000: 63).

There are of course politicians who are committed to democratic principles but, as described above, the disrespect for democratic institutions and procedures threatens to undermine democracy.

If we turn to the behavior at the mass-public level, we could observe the declining rates of participation in elections. In the elections during the 1980s, the abstention rate varied between 16 percent and 24 percent.[11] In the 1990s, the abstention rate has clearly been higher; in the elections in 1993 the abstention rate was 35 percent, in the elections in 1997 it was 28 percent, and finally, in the last election in the year 2001 the abstention rate was 34 percent (Tribunal Nacional de Elecciones, 2002). Thus, there

is a general trend of increasing abstention rates with the exception of the elections in 1985 and 1997, despite reforms that have been implemented to increase participation. One tentative explanation is that the higher levels of participation in the elections in 1985 were a reaction against Suazo's governing style and his attempts to manipulate the Electoral Tribunal. In 1997, the abstention rate decreased, and one possible cause could be that the Reina government was quite successful in implementing reforms, and demonstrated that not all civilian politicians were prepared to accept subordination to the military power.

Summary

The military no longer poses a credible threat to the new democracy because its power base was gradually reduced in the late 1990s. Rather, the chief problems in the post-transition period are to be found within the poorly institutionalized political society. Among the most serious drawbacks is the weak rule of law and public accountability, which is particularly well illustrated by the politicization of neutral institutions such as the judicial system, the Electoral Tribunal and the RNP. Naturally, this could affect the electoral process negatively. Moreover, the two traditional parties continue to dominate the political sphere, and the new parties lack financial resources to challenge their dominance. The political society is also weakened by more intangible institutions of authoritarian traditions, such as corruption, patrimonialism, clientelism and lack of transparency. These traditions are likely to reduce the political and economic performance, in terms of decreased effectiveness in decision-making, implementation of public policies and a less efficient use of public resources. Eventually, this could erode public trust and cause a declining legitimacy for the democratic system.

Overall, the civilian governments have not performed well in the post-transition period. The fact that part of the state apparatus, e.g. the judicial system, is subject to politicization is an example of the inability, or the lack of political will, to implement reforms. Moreover, the civilian governments have not been successful economically. In the 1980s Honduras had a deep economic crisis. Even though the economy is now showing signs

of recovery after hurricane Mitch, a majority of the population still lives in poverty, and the social indicators remain low. Continued low performance could produce a vicious circle of low efficiency and low legitimacy.

Legitimacy, here understood as support for the democratic system, has been low in the post-transition period. In the mid-1990s, support for democracy here was the lowest in Latin America. Satisfaction with democracy was also noticeably low. People had little trust in politicians and political institutions. However, the support for democracy seems to have increased since then. The attitudes of the elite towards democracy seem to be ambivalent. Part of the political elite has not complied with democratic rules, but used the democratic system to secure personal gain.

This chapter has offered an analysis of the state of democracy in the post-transition period. The major post-transitional challenges can be found in the structural and institutional context. But pro-democratic actors could alter unfavorable structural conditions. The conceptual framework presented in Chapter Five identified civil society as a potential actor in the process of crafting democracy in post-transition societies. Let us now, with this analysis of the democratic shortcomings, turn to how civil society has contributed to democratic development in post-transition Honduras.

Notes

1 Ciurlizza (2001) describes the judicial system in Latin America in general, but his description fits very well to the Honduran judicial system.

2 Tribunal Nacional de Elecciones (http://www.tne.hn).

3 According to Kurt Weyland, there is a widespread impression that corruption in Latin America has been increasing over the past two decades. Whereas bribery is not a new phenomenon, it now seems to be on the rise (1998: 108).

4 First position indicates the least corrupted. The index reflects the degree of perceived (by business people, academics and risk analysts) corruption among public officials and politicians (Transparency International, *The Corruption Perception Index*, 2001). In 1998 Honduras was ranked as number 84, and in 1999 as number 94 (http://www.transparency.org/cpi).

5 In the mid-1980s corruption flourished when Honduras became an important transit country for international drug trafficking. Honduras was at the time a transhipment point between Colombia and the USA (see Rosenberg 1988). In the words of Donald E. Schultz

& Deborah Sundloff-Schultz, trafficking was completely out of control by 1986-1987. Senior military officers from the navy and military intelligence were involved in drug trafficking together with the Honduran drug baron Matta Ballesteros (1994: 205-208; see also Rosenberg 1988).

6 In 1999 GNI per capita was US$ 780, and the aid per capita was US$ 131. In 2000 GNP per capita was US$ 860. The aid per capita in the same year was US$ 70 (World Bank, *World Development Indicators*, 2002).

7 See IMF/IDA, *Honduras. Decision Point Document for the Enhanced Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative* (2000). The HIPC initiative was launched in 1996. It is an attempt to eliminate the unsustainable debt in the poorest and most heavily indebted countries by debt relief. To qualify for debt relief within this initiative two things are required: the applying country has to demonstrate its capacity to "use prudently the assistance granted by establishing a satisfactory track record, normally three years, under IMF- and IDA supported programs". Moreover, the country has to write and implement a poverty reduction strategy (with participation of civil society). 36 countries have qualified for HIPC status so far. Of these 29 are sub-Saharan African countries. In Latin America, Guyana, Bolivia, Nicaragua and Honduras have been accepted in the HIPC program (World Bank, *Debt Initiative for Heavily Indebted Countries*, 2002).

8 Corporación Latinobarómetro is an independent organization that funds and coordinates the so-called Latinobarómetro, which is an annual survey conducted in 17 Latin American countries. The Latinobarómetro is structured as the Eurobarometer. Samples are representative of urban national populations. There are of course problems attached to the survey, such as for example the urban bias (Lagos 1997).

9 We have already briefly touched upon the methodological difficulties; figures such as "satisfaction with democracy" are only relevant on a relative scale, not as absolute figures. Hence, the level of support for democracy in Honduras is only relevant for comparisons in time—how the level of support has changed from one period of time to another—or possibly for regional comparisons in countries that have similar experiences.

10 In Nicaragua, the support increased from 59 percent to 72 percent in 1998, and fell to 64 percent in 2000. In El Salvador it increased from 56 percent to 79 percent in 1998, and fell to 63 percent in 2000. In Guatemala, the support declined from 51 percent in 1996 to 45 percent in 2000 (54 percent in 1998) (Lagos 2001).

11 In the elections to the Constituent Assembly in 1980, the abstention rate was 19 percent, and in the first general elections in 1981 the abstention rate was 21 percent. In the 1985 elections, the abstention rate was 16 percent and in the following election in 1989 it was 24 percent (Tribunal Nacional de Elecciones, 2002).

Chapter Nine

Civil Society in Post-Transition Honduras
A Mixed Picture

> When more countries arrive on the threshold of democracy without those structural or cultural qualities deemed important, when more arrive under conditions of harried and divisive mobilization, then the task of crafting should be the more crucial and challenging. Whatever the historical trends, whatever the hard facts, the importance of human action in a difficult transition should not be underestimated (Di Palma 1990: 9).

In this chapter, we turn to civil society's democracy-building functions in the post-transition period. Of course, civil society is not the only potential democracy-promoting actor in a newly established democracy. However, given the relatively limited interest of the civilian politicians to strengthen democracy, civil society stands out as particularly important in the post-transition period. This chapter is broadly divided into three parts. The first part consists of an attempt to map the Honduran civil society. It describes how civil society could be divided into old and new organizations, and how the new organizations, e.g. development NGOs, human rights organizations and indigenous movements, have been more visible and vociferous in the late 1990s compared to the old popular organizations. The second part of the chapter deals with one specific aspect of Honduran civil society—the internal levels of democracy—that affects its democracy-building potential. Finally, the third part of this chapter is devoted to a discussion of civil society as an educator, agenda setter, counterpart and source of new political alternatives and it demonstrates how the political context and the external influence put constraints upon civil society's democracy-building potential.

Mapping Civil Society

Honduras has, at least in a regional perspective, a strong tradition of popular participation. Even though repression was harsh under the Carías dictatorship and the mass media were restricted, civic engagement has generally been more accepted than in neighboring countries. It has been argued, for example, that Honduras has the strongest labor movement in the region. In addition, student movements and professional organizations emerged as important societal forces in the 1970s. Thus, in a regional comparison, Honduran civil society stands out as relatively strong.[1]

Even though civil society in Honduras is seen by many observers as fairly dynamic compared to that in neighboring countries, and new organizations have emerged after the transition to democracy, it has also been described as weak, at least compared to the 1970s when civil society organizations were much more coordinated. The workers', peasants' and teachers' movements were strong social forces in the 1970s, but are weak and marginalized groups today (cs interviewee T). According to one respondent, the organizations were weakened by the selective repression and the assassinations of civil society leaders, when conflicts in the region escalated in the 1980s. Another explanation, he argues, is to be found in the increasing number of development NGOs that emerged in the 1990s and gradually took over the old organizations' role. These organizations act as if they were *the* civil society and this is, in his view, a precarious situation, as these development NGOs are intimately involved with the politicians and the state (cs interviewee T).

In the Honduran context, it is not unusual to make a distinction between organizations that existed prior to the transition to democracy and organizations that have emerged in the post-transition period, such as development NGOs. Leticia Salomón, Julieta Castellanos & Mirna Flores distinguish between old organizations, e.g. the labor movement and the peasant movement on the one hand, and new organizations such as human rights organizations, women's organizations and development NGOs on the other hand (1996a: 51-52).

The "Old Generation" of Civil Society Organizations

The Honduran workers' movement has been debated. While often described as the strongest in the region, it has clearly been weakened since the 1950s. Salomón, Castellanos & Flores (1996a) argue that the movement is not strong but rather characterized by self-censorship and social discipline, due to the repression that targeted popular organizations in the 1980s. Both workers and the leadership were subject to repression in the 1970s and 1980s. However, the movement was also weakened by a deterioration of the leadership (Salomón et al. 1996a: 79-80). The leaders of certain trade unions have been co-opted by the government, and as a result these movements are subject to internal division and politicization (Salomón et al. 1996a: 77). Nancy Peckenham & Annie Street argue in the same vein that the labor movement was carefully controlled by the state with subtle means of inclusion (1985: 91). Hence whereas the governing elite has accepted organization, it has also tried to control the labor movement.

The Honduran peasant movement is divided. Villeda Morales' government created ANACH as a parallel peasant organization in 1962 because they were worried about FENACH's actions and its connection to the Communist Party. The government favored pro-government ANACH and, as a result, many peasants left FENACH, because they received more support from ANACH. In that way, the government was able to split the peasant movement and create a less radical organization. Kees Biekart argues that in the 1980s, the peasant movement was:

> weakened by internal competition among peasant leaders, provoking internal divisions and co-optation efforts by the government (Biekart 1999: 195).

Biekart maintains that it was the lack of coordination among the popular organizations, in combination with competition between the leaders, that prevented the organizations from being a strong social force that could challenge the traditional political parties (1999: 195). Thus, the peasant movement was disintegrated partly by the government's favoritism tactics, but also by factionalism and disputes among leaders (Kincaid 1985: 145).

In the same vein, Richard Lapper argues that the peasant movement has "suffered from sectarianism, corruption and personal rivalries" (1985: 119). But the peasant movement was also weakened by repression from the government's security forces. Peasants and peasant leaders have been repressed and there have been several cases of disappearances and murders. This has provoked a hostile relation between the government and the peasant movement (Salomón et al. 1996a: 86-93).

The Honduran governing elite's attitude towards the popular organizations is best described as a mix of reform and repression (Schultz 1992). While it accepted social organization it also, through different strategies, attempted to control and split civil society organizations. López Arellano's populist regime in the early 1970s tried to accommodate the mass public, and turned directly to the peasant and workers' movements. The actions of the popular sectors have been affected by attempts to co-opt the leaders, which was part of a strategy to control the worker and peasant movement (Schultz 1992: 3-4; Schultz & Sundloff-Schultz 1994: 315-317). The old organizations such as the labor and peasant movements were seriously weakened by the time of the transition, due to the governments' attempts to split and control the popular organizations.

The "New Generation" of Civil Society Organizations

After the transition to democracy a new kind of organizations emerged, partly as a result of the increasing militarization of the country and the human rights violations in the 1980s. As a response to the deteriorating human rights situation in the country, several human rights organizations were founded, such as the human rights committee (CODEH) and the organization for disappeared and detained (COFADEH) (Biekart 1999: 224). It is interesting to note that many organizations emerged in the 1980s, a decade when Honduran society was deeply affected by the implementation of the national security doctrine, and when many civil society organizations were targets of the security forces' repression.

This "new generation" of organizations also includes women's organizations, associations concerned with the defense of the rights of the indigenous people and organizations for workers in the *maquiladora* industry

and in the informal urban sector (Biekart 1999: 196; Salomón 1999: 58-59). The emergence of organizations for women's rights also coincided with the transition to democracy. *Machismo* is widespread in Honduras, and several organizations were founded to defend and promote women's rights and to weaken the *machismo* culture (e.g. Alvarado 1987: 51-56; Peckenham & Street 1985: 233-237; Acker 1988: 104-106). Among the organizations concerned with women's rights, Movimiento de Mujeres por la Paz "Vistación Padilla" is one of the most well known and respected (Acker 1988: 105). In addition, Centro de Derechos de Mujeres and the Centro de Estudios de la Mujer are also outspoken organizations for women's rights.

Another quickly growing part of civil society is the ethnically based organizations. The ethnic minority groups make up 470,000 people, or 7.2 percent of the population in Honduras.[2] In the late 1990s, such ethnic organizations have emerged as a visible and vociferous force. The umbrella organization COPINH (Consejo Cívico de Organizaciones Populares e Indígenas de Honduras), for example, has organized several protest marches to Tegucigalpa in defense of the rights of indigenous groups. In addition, organizations that promote and defend the rights of children gained increased importance in the 1990s, such as Compassion International, Casa Alianza and Fondo Cristiano para Niños. About 20 organizations working with children's rights form part of the umbrella organization COIPRODEN (Coordinadora de Instituciones Privadas Pro los Niños, Niñas y sus Derechos). Casa Alianza took the initiative for this umbrella organization for organizations working with children's rights and children in an exposed situation (dc interviewee G). Casa Alianza has reacted strongly against the incessant killings of street children in Honduras.[3]

A relatively new feature in Honduran civil society is the emergence of so-called development NGOs (organizaciones privadas de desarrollo).[4] A considerable share of these organizations receives external financing from multilateral and bilateral donors or by Western NGOs (see e.g. Biekart 1999: 194). These organizations are sometimes described as "private development institutes" or "non-profit consulting firms." In 1995, around 100 intermediary development NGOs provided services in areas such as agriculture, health, education, enterprise, micro credit, human rights, leadership training and technical assistance. Many belong to different

umbrella organizations, or networks (World Bank, *The Participation of Nongovernmental Organizations in Poverty Alleviation*, 1995: 8). For example, about 80 organizations belong to the development NGO network FOPRIDEH (Federación de Organizaciones Privadas de Desarrollo de Honduras) (cs interviewee Y).

How, then, can we understand the emergence of a new generation of civil society organizations? Salomón, Castellanos & Flores argue that in the early phase of the transition to democracy in the 1980s, popular participation was limited due to the regional and international context. The 1980s was a decade with weak civil society, a fragile political system and a seriously deteriorating economic and social situation (Salomón et al. 1996a: 35). Human rights organizations emerged as a reaction to the deteriorating human rights situation in the 1980s. These groups managed to place the human rights issue on the political agenda, and both human rights groups and women's groups worked to reform existing laws that had repressive effects on them. Many of these new groups emerged and developed as a consequence of the government's repressive politics. The activities of these groups were caused by a necessity to act (Salomón et al. 1996a: 37, 107).

Eventually, the 1990s brought a new milieu that opened up for increased civic participation, and there was a boom of new organizations concerned with development, democracy, environment and protection of ethnic minority groups. Human rights groups, who had focused on human rights in the 1980s, extended and reoriented their actions to include demands for a reform of the judicial system and modernization of the state including reforms of the electoral process. But the "old" organizations were still locked into the old discourse. The workers and peasants who were used to constant questioning of the politicians and of delivering a social critique knew no other language or method than that of confrontation (Salomón et al. 1996a: 36-37). To adjust to the new political situation constituted a real challenge for the old organizations. Salomón, Castellanos & Flores conclude that the new social actors, faster than the old ones, occupied the new political space that was opened up with the establishment of the new democracy (1996a: 47-51). Whereas the old popular organizations had developed in an authoritarian context, and accordingly tended to perceive the relation to the state in terms of conflict,

the new organizations that emerged in the 1990s had a less confrontational approach.

A Multitude of Interests

Honduran civil society is made up of a multitude of different collectivities with different interests. Several observers have described Honduran civil society as split and unable to develop a collective identity and a sense of unity (e.g. Biekart 1999: 212; Salomón et al. 1996a: 52-53). Civil society is not only split between the new and the old organizations. We have also seen how the peasant movement, for example, was characterized by internal struggles. According to Biekart, a culture of corruption, co-optation and clientelism has contributed to the division of civil society (1999: 212). Several interviewees stress that civil society is in fact fractionalized, and regard this split as negative as it weakens civil society's power. As long as each organization promotes its own interests, civil society has no power (ps interviewee G; cs interviewee Ab). This idea—regarding pluralism and conflicting interests as something that undermines civil society's power—is perhaps best understood as a legacy of authoritarian rule. In an authoritarian context it is not uncommon that different organizations form a united front against the authoritarian regime. However, after the transition differences tend to rise to the surface (cf. O'Donnell & Schmitter 1986). The endurance of this view is perhaps a sign of the difficulties of adjusting to the new democratic context

In conclusion, Honduran civil society can easily be divided into new and old organizations. The old organizations (e.g. peasant and labor movements) have had difficulties in adjusting to the new democratic context. New organizations, such as human rights organizations, women's organizations and ethnically based organizations, have emerged as a reaction to the counterfeit transition. The focus of this study is primarily on the new generation of organizations, the reason being that they have been most engaged in the public debate and most visible.[5] This choice does not imply that the old organizations are excluded from the study, only that the chief focus will be on the new organizations.

A Democratic Civil Society?

Some of civil society's democracy-building functions are affected by the internal levels of civicness and democracy. Opinions concerning the level of democracy in civil society organizations vary. Whereas some observers describe the internal democracy as weak (dc interviewee C), others believe they have reasonably democratic structures, even though they are not open, participatory organizations (dc interviewee B). With the risk of giving a simplified picture, it seems fair to say that while many organizations have formal democratic structures, they are managed quite differently in practice. These informal practices are not easily analyzed. Let us, however, discuss a few features that might have an impact on civil society's democracy-strengthening potential.

Continuismo and Personalismo

Rotating leadership is not a distinguishing quality of Honduran civil society. More characteristic of many civil society organizations is the strong traditions of *continuismo* and *personalismo*. One respondent argues that civil society needs to be democratized, and developing a new, democratic leadership remains one important task, as several organizations have had the same leadership for many years (cs interviewee S). It is not uncommon that the founders of an organization continue to keep control over the organizations, and that the power is concentrated on a small number of persons (dc interviewee A). One case in point is the human rights committee (CODEH). The founder and president of CODEH for many years—Ramón Custodio—is often described as a charismatic person. He played a very important role for the defense of human rights in the late 1980s, when he was one of the few courageous persons who spoke out against the human rights violations (dc interviewee F). But Custodio's leadership style was authoritarian, and he did not tolerate any internal opposition (Biekart 1999: 233-235). In 1989, half of the staff left the committee in protest against Custodio's leadership style (Biekart 1999: 233):

> He ran CODEH as if it were his own personal fiefdom, making it vulnerable to charges that it was a 'phantom committee' and that

> international aid was being misappropriated. He had an enormous ego. His arrogance made him difficult to work with and led even some of his supporters to suspect that he was as interested in power and publicity as anything else (Schultz & Sundloff-Schultz 1994: 246).

Custodio also refused to coordinate actions with other organizations because, in his view, student and women's groups lacked leadership capacity. CODEH and Custodio's leadership style must be understood in the light of a broader political context. The 1980s was a period of harsh repression, and leaders of peasant and human rights groups were often targets. Hence organizations like the human rights committee could not act as open participatory organizations. However, the inflexible attitude of Custodio obstructed adaptation to the new political situation in the 1990s (Biekart 1999: 232-233; dc interviewee F). Donors suggested reforms but Custodio refused to reorganize the committee:

> Up to the early 1990s an internal structure for consultation and democratic decision-making was absent, which was understandable given the fierce repression in Honduras. But even after the installation of an assembly with an elected executive board *de facto* decision-making power was concentrated in one person. Although Custodio enjoyed a high level of credibility, he did not tolerate any internal opposition (Biekart 1999: 235).

Given the political situation, few donors questioned the lack of internal democracy in the 1980s, when CODEH successfully acted as an important countervailing power. And, as described in Chapter Four, contributing to democratic development by being a countervailing power does not require internal democratic structures. However, as Biekart correctly points out, the fact that donors did not question the lack of internal democracy at the early stages probably obstructed a democratization of the organization when the political context was different (1999: 235). After the transition, donors suggested democratic reforms and initiatives but Custodio refused. Thus, CODEH failed to adapt to the new democratic environment and to transform itself from being the opposition to being part of a broader civil society, consisting of a multitude of organizations

with different experiences and interests. This provoked tensions between the donor society and the human rights committee (Biekart 1999: 231-235).[6]

As the case of Custodio and the human rights committee illustrates, traditions of *continuismo* and *personalismo* are thus not restricted to the political sphere, but exist within civil society as well. Although Honduran civil society is often described as strong, the low level of leadership rotation, in combination with an authoritarian leadership style, indicates that civil society is not always democratic. Representatives of the donor community describe many civil society organizations as ruled by charismatic and very able personalities, but with low levels of internal democracy and with centralized structures (dc interviewee B; dc interviewee D). There is a strong belief in authorities within the organizations and, accordingly, few would question the leadership.

The case of CODEH is perhaps exceptional. Yet, in Honduras the executive director of an organization has substantial power. Organizations are often associated with their charismatic leaders. While this is not a democratic problem *per se*, it certainly demonstrates the strong position of the leaders, and the lack of rotating leadership. The existence of strong leaders can be an important asset to the organizations. These persons are well-known and often personal friends with representatives of international donor agencies. They receive widespread media attention, attend international conferences, and their names could open many doors. And, given the repression against civil society in the 1980s, strong and courageous leaders were necessary. Leadership is a complex issue. One the one hand, this shows that it is important to have a strong leader who may be successful in making demands, attracting support and so on. On the other hand, the result might be a repression of dissident voices within the organization.

Clientelism and Verticalism

Several interviewees have emphasized the traditions of clientelism, paternalism and verticalism in Honduran civil society (cs interviewee F; cs interviewee S; cs interviewee G). Paternalism and verticalism are related

to the tradition of strong leadership and to the strong belief in authorities accounted for above. Power is concentrated in the hands of a few persons who control the organization paternalistically. Verticalism is widespread in Honduran society at large, and the verticalism in civil society is seen by many as a reflection of the vertical culture (cs interviewee F; cs interviewee G; dc interviewee F). During the authoritarian rule, when repression was harsh, this vertical organizational structure was necessary. The problem is that some organizations have encountered difficulties adapting to the new political context (dc interviewee F). The vertical structure of the organizations, with every decision taken at the top of the organization, has also obstructed cooperation between organizations, as the leaders have virtually no experience of discussions or compromises (cs interviewee S).

Another informal institution is the clientelistic relations and corrupt practices. Clearly, there are both transparent and corrupt civil society organizations, and it is important to stress that corruption is not only a civil society problem. Rather, corruption is widespread in Honduran society at large (Salomón et al. 1996b; Schultz & Sundloff-Schultz 1994: 204-205; cs interviewee I). The role of the donor community must be acknowledged in this discussion. It is possible that the Western development NGOs have contributed to this development. Private aid organizations give considerable financial support to organizations that are used to very limited resources. Suddenly, local organizations receive significant financial support, and then the donors unexpectedly decide to withdraw the support. Obviously, this creates a delicate situation for local organizations. Hence the problem of corruption is not only a local problem, but one clearly affected by the foreign organizations (dc interviewee B). What adds to the problem is that foreign aid could reinforce a centralistic and elitist leadership, as the relation between donors and receivers is often based on mutual confidence and concealed to outsiders (Biekart 1999: 299).

In conclusion, it seems reasonable to argue that the main problem regarding Honduran civil society organizations is not the formal democratic structure, which normally exists in some reasonable version. However, in practice, formal democratic structures tend to co-exist with traditions of verticalism, paternalism and clientelism, with subtle repression against dissident voices within the organization and with weak account-

ability. It is interesting to note that civil society has obvious similarities with political society. The traditions that we see in the political sphere—verticalism, *continuismo*, and prevailing clientelism—seem to exist in civil society as well. Hence, in order to understand civil society's relation to democracy we must consider the political context. Civil society organizations are not isolated islands of democracy and civicness but part of society at large. If there are, for example, strong traditions of verticalism and belief in authorities in society at large, these traditions are likely to exist in civil society as well.

Let us now turn to how civil society has contributed to democratic development in post-transition Honduras. It was argued in Chapter Five that civil society could—by being an educator, a counterpart, an agenda-setter, and a source of new political alternatives—contribute to democratic development, by strengthening the political society, improving regime performance and by contributing to increased legitimacy for the regime.

Civil Society as an Educator

Civil society can be a significant source of civic education both for the political elite and the mass public. The educational function embraces both the intangible diffusion of democratic values and ideas that individuals acquire when they participate in civil society organizations (if they are democratic and behave civilly), and the concrete political learning that is obtained through the information and education work that many organizations are engaged in. As aforementioned, one crucial challenge for a new democratic regime is to become perceived as legitimate by the citizens. In order to regard the regime as legitimate, people must have some basic knowledge about the political system—what they can expect from the political institutions, but also what their rights and duties as citizens are. One respondent from civil society argues that the main problem for Honduran democracy is the lack of education at all levels (cs interviewee L). Civil society can in this context play an important role by promoting educational projects. Civil society could also function as an arena where a more intangible process of learning by doing takes place.

Education Projects

Numerous civil society organizations in Honduras are involved in the project of educating the citizens concerning different aspects of the democratic system such as for example human rights:

> This [course on human rights] is very important to us. Because if we don't know what our rights are, we can't demand that they be respected. For example, I took a course that taught us that when we're captured by the DNI and held incommunicado, we can't be held more than 24 hours without being charged. And that if the DNI keeps someone incommunicado, we can get what they call a writ of habeas corpus, which says we have the right to know where that person is being held. They taught us how we could appeal to the court with this habeas corpus, asking them to present the prisoner. This is very important for us to know [...] So having that course in human rights has been very important to us. Otherwise we'd have never known about habeas corpus and all that (Alvarado 1987: 134-135).

Elvia Alvarado is a peasant organizer, and as a result of her work she has been harassed, jailed and tortured by the Honduran military.[7] Her story illustrates the importance of the educational work in which many civil society organizations are engaged. More awareness and knowledge as regards human rights and democracy is clearly needed for ordinary citizens. Citizens need to be taught about their basic political rights and obligations (ps interviewee C).

A considerable number of civil society organizations work with education and training (*capacitación*) projects for the citizens. These projects aim at educating citizens and, typically, involve production of intelligible information material and courses or seminars. CODEH, for example, works with education in rural areas to educate peasants about human rights and how they can defend their rights (cs interviewee E). The human rights organization Centro de Investigación y Promoción de Derechos Humanos (CIPRODEH) has for several years offered courses to train the armed forces in respect for human rights. CIPRODEH was actually the first organization to train the armed forces. Its vision was not only to

defend human rights, but to promote respect for human rights among the military as well. The organization decided not to confront the military with abuses committed, but worked with education (cs interviewee J; CIPRODEH, information material). Moreover, the organization has also initiated a project called *Pulso legislativo*, which is an initiative to teach citizens how they can approach the members of Congress. CIPRODEH provides citizens with information on how the Congress works and informs about the decision-making process. *Pulso legislativo* is an information mechanism that aims at giving people basic knowledge concerning the legislative power, and CIPRODEH believes that the project could also be a way of strengthening the Congress (CIPRODEH, *Pulso legislativo*, 1999).

A number of civil society organizations orient their projects to particularly vulnerable groups or to groups in an exposed situation. One such example is the projects that aim at educating women and help them initiate a legal process if they have been victims of abuse. *Machismo* is deeply rooted in Honduran society, and women are often abused and discriminated (cs interviewee H; Acker 1988: 104-105). Centro de Derechos de Mujeres (CDM) has a project—Programa Jurídico Social—that aims at teaching women how to use their rights. In the project Area de Asistencia Legal y Acompañamiento Emocional, CDM helps women who have been exposed to violence to initiate a legal process, and guides them through the legal system (cs interviewee H). In another program concerned with education, CDM helps women establish self-help groups (cs interviewee H). In the so-called Escuela de Promotoras Legales, CDM trains women to defend their rights and to help other women. More specifically, they work with women's rights in their contacts with the public health service, social services, the judicial system and the police. CDM also produces intelligible pamphlets to inform women of their rights (cs interviewee H; CDM, information material). Movimiento de Mujeres por la Paz "Vistación Padilla", another civil society organization concerned with women's rights, works with female political participation, and attempts to extend female participation beyond voting. Visitación Padilla coordinates its activities with CDM and Centro de Estudios de Mujer (cs interviewee M).

COFADEH, the organization for the disappeared and detained, also works with different kinds of education projects. One project aims at

recovering history, i.e. to make sure that people do not forget about the human rights abuses committed by regimes in the past. The organization works to regain people's memory, with workshops in the communities, with radio programs, with written material and with official declarations (cs interviewee V). In one project COFADEH focuses on teachers, so that they will be able to speak about the country's history in schools, colleges and universities. The education takes place in several departments, and covers themes such as human rights, the history of the disappearances, the military impunity, family legislation and children's rights, labor legislation and violence against women (cs interviewee V). Moreover, the organization is engaged in leadership training and educates members of the peasant movements and unions to become future leaders. The courses cover themes such as leadership and organization theory. In addition, COFADEH has arranged workshops in the indigenous communities, focusing on the specific difficulties that the indigenous groups face.[8] But COFADEH's training activities are not restricted to ordinary citizens. The organization finds it important to educate government officials and civil servants at both the regional and national level in the human rights area. COFADEH therefore works with training programs for judges, mayors, councilmen, policemen, prosecutors, militaries, defense councils, medical doctors, nurses and other staff at hospitals and health clinics. The training programs cover issues such as the functions and responsibilities of civil servants, human rights, justice and impunity, citizen's rights and the rule of law (COFADEH, *Memoria—diez años educando en derechos humanos*, 2001).

By educating or training ordinary citizens, civil society organizations such as CIPRODEH, CODEH and COFADEH can increase the civic competence in society and make people more conscious of their rights and duties as citizens in a democratic system. Today, many citizens lack basic information concerning their rights. For example, many Hondurans tend to vote out of tradition or for the party that gives away food in the poor neighborhoods. Against this background, the civic education carried out by civil society organizations is an important aspect of strengthening the political society and democracy at large; people could learn how to make demands and thus public accountability could be strengthened. But it is

not only ordinary citizens who need information and training. Civil servants and politicians also need training concerning issues related to democracy and human rights (cs interviewee G). Therefore, several organizations are engaged in the work of leadership training and capacity building. For example, Universidad Tecnológica Centroamericana (UNITEC) has a program called Programa de Capacitación Municipal, which is concerned with capacity building in the municipalities. They work with the legislative part of the municipality, with the technical and administrative staff and with the local leaders. The purpose is to strengthen democracy at the local level, to strengthen the capacity of the municipalities and to work with questions related to decentralization. In brief, the program is devoted to teach different ways of organizing the activities in the municipality. The administrative staff, for example, is taught methods of administration (m/a interviewee C).

ASONOG and CIPRODEH have also been involved in leadership training and capacity building for politicians and civil servants at the local level. Education at the local level is of special importance, because at the local level clientelistic structures and caudillistic leadership tend to be especially persistent. People in the communities often have problems with their relations to authorities. They are not aware of their rights and rarely place demands on the politicians (cs interviewee Ac). Civil society could alter the attitudes at the local level and teach people that democracy is more than voting (cs interviewee L). ASONOG, for example, which works with municipality development and capacity training of mayors, believes that it is important to strengthen the local capacity to increase participation, and they coordinate their work with the local Consejos de Desarollo Municipal (CODEM) (cs interviewee D). CIPRODEH also works with the CODEMs to strengthen, democratize and develop the municipalities from below (cs interviewee J). A political elite that is committed to democratic rule is indispensable for the survival of a new democracy. Training politicians and civil servants is therefore one of the most important tasks of civil society in the post-transition period.

Of course, within the scope of this particular study we cannot assess the effects of the organizations' educational efforts. That would require an in-depth evaluation of specific education projects. The purpose here is rather

to show that civil society organizations are carrying out these kinds of educational activities. Civic education is something that the donor community supports and, of course, there are organizations that are in this business only to make a profit. It is also important to note that some organizations might not be doing what they claim to be doing.

Learning by Doing?

The literature on civil society emphasizes the importance of the civic training that ordinary citizens acquire through their regular participation in organizations. Such training is, of course, important for the development of democratic attitudes and behavior. However, this "learning by doing" development of behavior congruent with democracy presupposes internal structures that allow democratic participation. Not every organization in civil society has internal democratic structures or allows democratic deliberation. Thus, for this learning by doing to occur, the internal practices must allow democratic participation. To what extent this actually occurs is very difficult to assess. The traditional political parties have certainly not served as democratic role models, given their lack of internal democracy at least until the recent reforms. Against this background, a civil society that spreads democratic values is even more critical for the future development of democracy. However, many organizations that work with development-related issues, for example, are not membership organizations but often foundations or private development organizations, which are sometimes described as non-profit consulting firms or private development institutes. These kinds of organizations may very well be successful in the educational area, with leadership training or capacity building, but probably not by letting citizens participate and acquire knowledge through a process of learning by doing.

In conclusion, civil society organizations, particularly those concerned with human rights and women's rights, have been an important source of civic education in post-transition Honduras. With almost no prior experience of democracy, and in combination with low levels of literacy, knowledge of the democratic system and of citizens' political and civil rights is low. The political parties are electoral machines with limited

participatory practices. Against this background, civil society is an important source of civic education. However, whereas several organizations successfully implement educational projects, often with the most vulnerable groups such as women, indigenous groups and landless peasants in focus, the idea of civil society as "large free schools of democracy" is perhaps of less importance for post-transition Honduras due to the low levels of internal democracy.

Civil Society as a Source of New Political Alternatives

Another potential democracy-building function of civil society is being a source of pluralism. More concretely, this refers to civil society as a source of new political alternatives, or as a pool of new leadership. Civil society as such a source refers not only to new ideologies, or new political parties, but also to new types of leaders, new competent public administration staff and new kinds of organizational management. Let us now turn to a discussion of how civil society has contributed to democratic development by generating new political alternatives and by producing a transfer of leadership.

New Political Parties

In Honduras, the pluralism of civil society constituted a welcome challenge to the bipartisan system, which is often described as almost totally lacking ideological substance (cs interviewee F; cs interviewee G; cs interviewee H; cs interviewee I). The electoral machine nature of the traditional parties and their similar ideological orientation has created a political situation that Salomón describes as lacking any opposition (1998a: 41-42). The parties do not function as think tanks—there is no process of reflection or any new political ideas or policies, and consequently there is no public deliberation or debate in society (cs interviewee I). The absence of such a critical political opposition has obviously left some space for civil society. Against this background, it has been argued that the political opposition comes from civil society, rather than from the political parties in opposition (cs interviewee I).

Three new political parties have emerged in the two last decades—PUD, PINU and PDCH. Even though they have not succeeded in ending the dominance of the traditional parties, they constitute a vital challenge to them, improve representation, contribute to an increased pluralism in society and may, with time, stimulate a healthy debate.[9] The most recent newcomer is the leftist party, PUD, which claims to have its origins in civil society. PUD, one respondent argues, is a product of the efforts within different sectors of civil society; the leadership has its background in civil society organizations, as trade union leaders, community leaders and the like. The leadership of PUD has also worked to keep the party open for participation of all the sectors in society (ps interviewee H). PDCH also has its background in civil society, but in contrast to PUD, it has its origins in the Christian cooperative movement. The Christian movement organized several peasant organizations in the 1960s (ps interviewee I). The emergence of new parties has contributed to an increased openness, and they play an important controlling role in the Congress and balance the traditional hegemonic parties (ps interviewee G). In the Honduran debate, the small parties are often referred to as part of civil society (ps interviewee G). While we have excluded political parties from our definition of civil society on the grounds that they compete for formal power, the new parties, with their origins in civil society, seem to have bridged the divide between the traditional political parties and civil society.

Both the National Party and the Liberal Party were undemocratic organizations until a few years ago. It is possible that the decision to democratize the internal structure is a consequence of the emergence of new political parties in the electoral arena. It is rather unlikely that any of the new political parties will become a strong political actor in the immediate future, but by providing an alternative, the small parties could challenge the traditional parties. Moreover, by their mere existence new parties contribute to increased pluralism in political society. They give the voters at least a feeling that they can choose a party that represents them. New parties could also increase the legitimacy of the democratic system by offering new political alternatives to the voters. With new alternatives, a substantial political debate could finally be stimulated.

Transfer of Leadership

Civil society can also be a fertile breeding ground for a new democratic leadership and for a competent staff in the public administration. Civil society can, accordingly, generate a new democratic leadership that has its background in civil society organizations or movements, rather than in the traditional parties, which are often associated with the economic elite or with corrupt practices. One serious obstacle to democratic development in Honduras is the absence of democratic leaders. The young generations are not visible in the political sphere, with the exception of the children of the old generation politicians, which has raised the issue of nepotism (Foro Ciudadano, *¡Demandemos transparencia electoral!*, 2001). There is thus a need for a new democratic leadership and this is a serious problem for the country (m/a interviewee B).

A transfer of leadership from civil society to political society has not yet occurred in Honduras on a large scale. More common, however, is that former civil society leaders acquire positions as experts in the government (ps interviewee D). Thus, it is not a question of civil society leaders becoming politicians but rather experts or government officials. According to one interviewee from political society, this transfer runs in both directions—civil society leaders become government officials, and politicians leave the government and become integrated into civil society. As an example, he mentions the former president of Foro de Convergencia Nacional (FONAC), a semi-governmental organization, Marco Orlando Iriarte who ran as presidential candidate for PDCH in the elections in 2001. The subsequent president of FONAC, Juan Ferrera, used to be the Minister of the Treasury. Ferrera was also the president of COHEP, the organization for private business (ps interviewee D). However, it is mostly politicians who consider FONAC to be part of civil society, a question that we will return to at the end of this chapter, and, consequently, we must ask ourselves whether these examples really constitute a case of transfer of leadership between political society and civil society. The position of this study is that the case is rather an example of transfer of leadership within the political sphere.

Other respondents maintain that there is no exchange between the

political society and civil society at all (cs interviewee Ab; ps interviewee I). In their view, the political class is an exclusive caste, and the same persons remain in their positions for very long periods of time (cs interviewee Ab). Thus, there are no new injections of ideas or initiatives. The only exception, according to one respondent, is the small parties whose members often have civil society backgrounds (cs interviewee Ab). The *continuismo* and the subsequent lack of new leaders are not unique for political society, but are true also for the peasant and labor unions (ps interviewee I). Some respondents were offended when asked if it was common to leave civil society for political society. Perhaps this reaction could be explained by the generally low confidence in politicians (PNUD, *El desafío democrático*, 1997: 20-33). Politicians are generally looked upon as dishonest people and thieves (cs interviewee Aa).

To summarize civil society's function as a source of new political alternatives, there has not been any major transfer of leadership from civil society to the political community. But three new parties have emerged, and even though they have not challenged the persistent dominance of the traditional parties, they contribute to pluralism in society.

Civil Society as an Agenda Setter

Civil society can contribute to democratic development by its agenda setting function or its capacity to act as a policy initiator (e.g. Walt 1994: 61). Civil society organizations can set priorities for the agenda particularly concerning the issues that the government tries to avoid. By setting such priorities, civil society could contribute to increased efficiency and perceived legitimacy. In post-transition Honduras, this is perhaps the only way to draw attention to issues that the traditional elite wants to avoid. Civil society is in some cases the only way through which opinions and demands from society are being represented and articulated. Honduran civil society has been particularly effective as an agenda setter in three main policy areas: reform of the judicial system, reform of the electoral system, and the defense of the rights of ethnic minorities.

Demands for a Judicial Reform

A transparent, independent, efficient, predictable and accountable judicial system is a crucial element in a democracy. Without an independent and efficient judicial system there can, for instance, be no sanctions against corruption. The judicial system in Honduras has been an authoritarian remnant and has, after the transition to democracy, lacked the necessary independence from the executive branch. As the judicial institutions have been part of the spoils system, there were few incentives for the dominant parties to initiate judicial reform (Romero & Salomón 2000). Therefore, civil society has been a fierce critic of the judicial system and has demanded a reform of the judicial system and the police since the mid-1990s. Civil society organizations managed to put the issue of the judicial system on the political agenda by informing the citizens through the media about the flaws and shortcomings of the system. Among other things, civil society demanded a reform of the nomination process for the Supreme Court magistrates, with civil society representation in the nominating committee (e.g. Romero & Salomón 2000; dc interviewee E).

With financial support from USAID, a Commission for Judicial Reform (Comisión para la Reforma del Sistema Judicial) was established that was supposed to come up with suggestions for increased efficiency of the reforms of the judicial system (Sieder & Costello 1996: 176). In the year 2000, the Commission suggested that a *Junta nominadora* should nominate candidates for the magistrates of the Supreme Court. When the independent *Junta nominadora* assembled to present their nominations in October 2001, university representatives, civil society, and political parties were represented (*La Tribuna* 15.10.01). This reform of the Supreme Court has been implemented partly as a result of civil society's demands for a reform of the judicial system (cs interviewee Y; m/a interviewee B; dc interviewee E). One respondent argues that the reform was a result of a civil society initiative, and that 80 percent of the reform was based on civil society's demands (cs interviewee Y). As a result of the reform, the appointment of judges is no longer controlled by the Congress and is also less of a game between the political parties. Consequently, the political parties' influence over the Supreme Court is reduced. As a result of the reform, other organizations and groups in society are allowed to

participate in the nomination process (m/a interviewee B). The external pressures for a judicial reform strengthened civil society's agenda-setting position. USAID, for example, has promoted a modernization of the judicial system in Central America since the early 1980s. In addition, foreign investors and the domestic business sector reacted against inefficiency and corruption of the judicial system, and joined civil society organizations in their pressure for a reform (Sieder & Costello 1996: 172). Thus, the reform of the judicial system is likely to have been the result of a combination of factors, but civil society, clearly, played an important agenda-setting role.

Demands for an Electoral Reform

After six presidential and parliamentary elections, the electoral process is still marred by undemocratic features. It is not a question of openly fraudulent elections, but the electoral process and the electoral institutions are impaired by certain elements that undermine transparency. Foro Ciudadano, one of the most vociferous civil society actors, acknowledged these flaws a couple of weeks before the elections in 2001. In an "open letter", the umbrella organization maintained that a reform of the electoral system would be an urgent task for all, including the politicians who should be worried about their lack of credibility among the citizens and about how democratic institutions are discredited. Especially problematic is the party-political influence over allegedly neutral institutions. The state should not be serving partisan interests, Foro Ciudadano argued, but all citizens (Foro Ciudadano, *¡Demandamos transparencia electoral!*, 2001).

One example of the imperfections of the electoral process is that the names of the candidates for the Congress are not presented until a few days before the election, and voters, consequently, have no possibility to form an opinion of the candidates (Foro Ciudadano, *¡Demandamos transparencia electoral!*, 2001; m/a interviewee B). A related problem concerns the candidates who are elected in the internal elections, but are replaced at the last minute by somebody else who has been picked by the leaders of the party or even the President himself (Foro Ciudadano, *¡Demandamos transparencia electoral!*, 2001). In another open letter, Foro Ciudadano expresses its deep concern as regards the politicization of the electoral

process and the disrespect for the electoral laws. The letter stresses that no person, group or political party has the right to alter the electoral laws, or obstruct other political parties' participation in the elections (Foro Ciudadano, *¡Exigimos un proceso electoral limpio!*, 2000). This open letter was a protest against the Liberal Party's attempts to manipulate the electoral process. The background was that the Liberal Party did not accept one of the National Party's candidates for the presidency, Ricardo Maduro, on the grounds that he was not Honduran by birth. Maduro, with his agenda for reforms, was obviously seen as a threat by the Liberal Party. The Electoral Tribunal, controlled by the Liberals, followed this line and initially decided that Maduro was not allowed to run. The Liberal candidate, Rafael Pineda Ponce, was also the President of the Congress, something that further contributed to the belief that the governing party was manipulating the electoral process. Consequently, Maduro's movement, Arriba Honduras, had to go to the primary elections with an unknown candidate. Despite this, Arriba Honduras received 90 percent of the votes. After the primaries, civil society organizations and the business community put pressure on the Congress to accept Maduro's candidacy, which it finally did in February 2001 (Sida, *Utvecklingssamarbetet med Honduras*, 2001; Salomón 2002: 30; ps interviewee C). The attempt of the Liberal Party to prevent Maduro from running seems to be a clear case of what Schedler refers to as the ruling parties' tailor-made instruments that make it possible to exclude opponents from electoral competition, and "nationality clauses" like this seem to be a case in point. Subsequently, the political campaigns, particularly the Liberal campaign, revolved around personal issues such as the true nationality of Maduro (Salomón 2002: 31; cf. Schedler 2002: 42). But civil society organizations clearly played an important role in this process by demanding that the Congress accept Maduro's candidacy.

Foro Ciudadano also emphasizes the importance to putting an end to electoral nepotism—the tendency that the children and siblings of politicians emerge as candidates. Politicians can use their influence within the parties to negotiate to get their children elected (Foro Ciudadano, *¡Demandamos transparencia electoral!*, 2001). In another open letter, Foro Ciudadano encourages the citizens to vote. The organization also empha-

sizes that no one should accept that the Electoral Tribunal hinders a citizen to vote by removing its name from the voting lists. Moreover, the open letter also informs the citizens that no one has the right to tell anyone for whom they must vote for, and that one does not have to vote for the family's party, or the patron's party (Foro Ciudadano, *Hondureño: ¡Cuida tu derecho a elegir!*, 2001).

The democratic shortcomings of the electoral process are linked to the politicization of supposedly impartial democratic institutions, such as the executive's control over TNE and RNP, and the more intangible traditions of clientelism and patrimonialism. Civil society has, through Foro Ciudadano, managed to attract attention to the democratic deficits of the electoral process. It remains to be seen if there is any political will to reform the electoral process. President Maduro has included a reform of the electoral system in his reform program (e.g. Sida, *Utvecklingssamarbetet med Honduras*, 2002).

Demands for the Rights of Ethnic Minorities

In the 1990s, indigenous movements emerged as strong voices within civil society that have managed to attract attention to the rights of the indigenous population. One example of civil society's agenda-setting power in this respect is the creation of the municipality of San Francisco de Opalaca, which is a case of indigenous groups demanding their own municipality. One of the most important organizations in the process was Comité de las Organizaciones Populares de Intibuca (COPIN), but other organizations were also engaged. Lenca groups in the Yamaranguilla municipality wanted a municipality of their own, because of their marginalized position. Sawmills devastated the forests, which the Lencas considered as part of their patrimonial legacy. This accentuated the Lenca groups' need for a municipality of their own (RDS-HN, *La creación del municipio de San Francisco de Opalaca*, 1999).

In 1993 the inhabitants of the north of Yamaranguilla organized themselves and eventually marched to the regional government where they demanded withdrawal of the sawmills, construction of a road they had been promised and support for the creation of a new municipality.

The Lenca groups received support from other civil society organizations such as labor unions, student movements, human rights organizations, ecologists and other indigenous organizations, from all over the country. The following year, COPIN organized a march to Tegucigalpa and protested outside the Congress. The government eventually decided to create a new municipality and, through a decree, the government created the municipality of San Francisco de Opalaca in July 1994. In the new municipality the Lenca groups could develop and govern in accordance with their traditions (RDS-HN, *La creación del municipio de San Francisco de Opalaca*, 1999). Hence COPIN's actions put the ethnic issue on the agenda and, as the report written by RDS-HN argues, this challenged the view that is taught in the schools, namely that Honduras is a homogenous country made up of a mestizo population (RDS-HN, *La creación del municipio de San Francisco de Opalaca,* 1999).

Another example of civil society's agenda-setting power concerning the rights of ethnic minorities is the reform of Article 107 of the constitution. Article 107 stated that only Hondurans could own land close to the national borders. In order to develop tourism and to attract foreign investments, the government wanted to reform the law so that coastland could be sold to foreign investors. The reform would have meant a displacement of thousands of indigenous families that already lived in the coastal area. This provoked strong feelings among the indigenous groups, and about 800 persons marched to protest in Tegucigalpa. In front of the Congress they demanded that Congress not ratify the reform of Article 107. The demonstration was arranged by the Consejo Cívico de Organizaciones Populares e Indígenas de Honduras (COPINH). The protests against the reform of Article 107 contributed to an increased interest in the rights of the indigenous population and put the issue of the indigenous population on the agenda (*La Prensa* 14.10.98; 17.10.98; 21.07.99; 26.01.99; 05.09.00; 01.09.01; dc interviewee D).

As with the case of the judicial reform, we cannot conclude that it is only through civil society's agenda-setting power that the new municipality was created or the reform of Article 107 was stopped. But clearly, civil society managed to put the issue on the agenda. The cases cited above are only a

few examples of civil society's agenda-setting power. Civil society has clearly been successful as an agenda setter in the post-transition period.

Civil Society as a Counterpart

A new democracy could easily get trapped in a vicious circle of low efficiency in combination with high expectations of the citizens and, consequently, low perceived legitimacy. In this context, civil society could contribute to democratic development in the post-transition period by being a counterpart of the government. Civil society organizations can contribute to increased efficiency and, consequently, legitimacy, by designing, implementing and evaluating projects in different policy areas e.g. agricultural development, health, housing and education.[10] Not surprisingly then, civil society as a counterpart is a common theme in the so-called NGO literature (e.g. Bebbington & Thiele 1993). The general idea is that civil society organizations (in the literature the focus is often on development NGOs) are more efficient, have more knowledge, more field presence and better local contacts than do state agencies (Hudock 1999: 8). It has, for example, been argued that whereas the government only has one solution for the entire country and fails to see that different parts of the country have different needs, development NGOs have better knowledge of the needs and adapt their work to the needs of the specific region (cs interviewee S).

By allowing civil society to provide assistance to the government in specific policy areas, the performance of the new democratic regime could increase, and this could, eventually, produce increased legitimacy for the democratic system. Hence civil society participation could lead to more efficient use of public resources. This is, however, a hazardous business since the government can also exploit civil society. Yet, in some areas, like developmental work, civil society's expertise is desperately needed. What is required for civil society's counterpart function to be conducive to democratic development is a relationship between the government and civil society where the government could benefit from the expertise in the latter, but without exploiting it. In this process, the autonomy of civil society must be respected. If civil society's autonomy is respected, and if the government takes its responsibilities seriously, a partnership that could be conducive to democracy might evolve.

In post-transition Honduras there have been several cases of civil society cooperation with the government in different areas such as health, housing, agricultural development and education. Many organizations have joint projects with e.g. the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education. Movimiento de Mujeres por la Paz "Visitación Padilla", for example, cooperates with the Ministry of Health to establish centers at the neighborhood level to prevent violence against women and to assist women who have been abused. Visitación Padilla also cooperates with the Ministry of Education in their work that aims at educating teachers on women's rights (cs interviewee M). Several development NGOs cooperate with the social investment fund (FHIS) for the construction of schools, and with INA—the national agrarian institute—when they work with questions related to land (cs interviewee R). Moreover, several organizations that work with children and children's rights have joint projects with IHNFA (Instituto Hondureño de la Niñez y de la Familia) (cs interviewee U).

In comparison with Guatemala, Honduran organizations have developed slowly, and the cooperation between civil society and authorities has worked relatively smoothly. Honduran organizations have learned to cooperate over a considerable period of time, and do not have the confrontational attitude that characterizes the Guatemalan organizations. In general, Honduran organizations are more flexible (dc interviewee A; see also Isaksson 1999: 12). The counterpart function will here be illustrated by two examples of civil society and government cooperation: the cooperation with the social investment fund (FHIS), and the reconstruction process after hurricane Mitch.

Partnership with Civil Society—FHIS

One particularly illustrative example of civil society as a counterpart is civil society participation in the Honduran social investment fund, Fondo Hondureño de Inversion Social (FHIS). Social investment funds (SIFs) were created in the late 1980s and early 1990s to alleviate the negative impacts of the structural adjustment policies on the most vulnerable groups. SIF programs are concerned with short-term poverty alleviation, and finance projects (e.g. small-scale social and economic infrastructure, credit, technical

assistance) on the community level (World Bank, *The Participation of Nongovernmental Organizations in Poverty Alleviation*, 1995: v). SIF agencies do not carry out the projects themselves, but these are implemented and co-funded by development NGOs, community groups and local governments. Community participation, or community-driven development, is an objective, and all projects are therefore proposed, designed and implemented by these actors (World Bank, *Social Investment Funds*, 1999).

The Honduran social investment fund was, together with the Family Assistance Program (PRAF), established in 1990 to compensate for the structural adjustment program implemented the same year (World Bank, *Ex-Post Evaluation of the Honduran Social Investment Fund*, 1999). Around 90 percent of FHIS' resources come from bilateral and multilateral donors. In addition to the international aid, FHIS is also financed by municipalities, government ministries, NGOs and community groups (World Bank, *The Participation of Nongovernmental Organizations in Poverty Alleviation*, 1995: 2; Salomón et al. 1996a: 134). The Honduran social investment fund works with small projects that aim at improving the standard of living in the poor communities where illiteracy and malnutrition are common and government services are limited. The activity concentrates on four programs: infrastructure, basic needs, informal sector-credit and credit, and technical assistance for rural micro-enterprises (World Bank, *The Participation of Nongovernmental Organizations in Poverty Alleviation*, 1995: 5-6).[11] FHIS claims that they try to distribute the funds fairly to achieve a more equal distribution, and that they concentrate on the poorest communities so that poverty can be reduced. All projects are discussed in open meetings, in which representatives from every community participate and every decision is taken in an open assembly (ps interviewee B).

FHIS has served as a bridge between state and society in Honduras (Salomón et al. 1996a: 134). According to one evaluation, there has been substantial civil society participation (i.e. development NGOs) in FHIS projects, especially in the delivery of social services and the administration of small credit programs for informal sector entrepreneurs (World Bank, *The Participation of Nongovernmental Organizations in Poverty Alleviation*, 1995: vii):

> NGOs play a prominent role in the FHIS, and the FHIS has been instrumental in providing NGOs—especially national NGOs—with the opportunity to work with the government on poverty reduction on a nationwide basis. This collaboration has benefited not only the poverty groups whose standard of living the FHIS has improved, but also the government and the NGOs. The FHIS would not have been as successful without NGO involvement, and without the FHIS, the NGOs would not have had access to the resources and experience that FHIS subproject financing provided. More broadly, the government—and the health and education ministries in particular—would not have enjoyed wider coverage and greater services delivery without NGO participation in the FHIS (World Bank, *The Participation of Nongovernmental Organizations in Poverty Alleviation*, 1995: 26).

Thus, the evaluation indicates that both FHIS and development NGOs have benefited from the cooperation. FHIS benefited from NGO participation because NGO-executed projects have been able to mobilize more resources (technical and financial) than projects executed by private contractors would have done, and as a result FHIS has been able to expand social services. According to the evaluation referred to above, NGO participation normally lowers the costs as compared to private contractors, and NGOs often implement subprojects more efficiently than the public sector does. However, there are also costs associated with NGO participation; NGO implementation requires more supervision than private contractors, and more investment in time and resources. But the NGOs have also benefited, mainly because of the employment opportunities generated by the new financing, and the institutional strengthening in terms of technical assistance and training as a result of the interaction with FHIS (World Bank, *The Participation of Nongovernmental Organizations in Poverty Alleviation*, 1995: 21). The report on NGO participation in poverty alleviation also states that within the so-called "Basic Needs Program" the quality of the social services projects has been satisfactory and that this is due to "the NGO's technical abilities and monitoring capacity" (1995: 9).

To sum up, civil society (development NGOs) and the government work together in joint projects that seem to benefit both parts and, in the

case of FHIS, also the poor (World Bank, *Ex-Post Evaluation of the Honduran Social Investment Fund*, 1999). But there is a risk that too much involvement with the politicians will result in a politicization of civil society's work. Particularly in an electoral process, there is a danger that the government engages in the organizations' work in order to able to use it in the electoral campaign to attract voters (cs interviewee U). Another potential risk, of course, is that the government relies on civil society to deliver social services to the population. Civil society organizations could assist the government in the development area, but they should not have to take full responsibility for the delivery of social service (cs interviewee Q). From this point of view, it is imperative that civil society remains autonomous, and keeps its countervailing power position.

Reconstruction and Transformation after Hurricane Mitch

The reconstruction work that was initiated after hurricane Mitch in late 1998 provides a particularly illustrative example of cooperation between the government and civil society organizations. At the same time, the example shows that, despite the pronounced intentions to cooperate with civil society, the government tried to control the reconstruction process.

> Hurricane Mitch not only laid bare hillside slums; it also laid bare the foundations of injustice on which Honduran society has been built. Many of those who have benefited from the injustice of the past see Mitch as merely one more opportunity for gain. Other Hondurans, especially the poor, see Mitch as an opportunity to reconstruct a more just and democratic country in the wake of the storm (Jeffrey 1999).

Mitch was indeed a tragic event, but it also provided an opportunity for increased civic participation (cs interviewee Aa). People wanted to know how the government planned to reconstruct the country, from where the help came, what kind of help it was and how it was distributed. In this process civil society became an important social auditor to ensure that the aid did not end up in corrupt persons' pockets (cs interviewee Aa; cs interviewee E). Civil society perceived the reconstruction process as a window of opportunity to make their voice heard and to initiate funda-

mental changes in Honduran society that were needed to avoid a similar disaster in the future. Honduras had once before the same opportunity, 25 years ago when hurricane Fifi struck the country, but the opportunity was lost (Foro Ciudadano, *Propuesta de reconstruccion y transformación nacional*, 1999). The reconstruction work after hurricane Fifi was marked by corruption (Jeffrey 1999). Against this background, the reconstruction process after hurricane Mitch was regarded as an opportunity that the country could not afford to lose—an opportunity to create a new and more democratic Honduras. Mitch presented an opportunity to strengthen democracy, because the population could participate in the reconstruction (cs interviewee G).

It is a quite widespread belief that Mitch strengthened Honduran civil society. Organizations that had led a languishing life suddenly flourished and demonstrated their capacity (dc interviewee F; dc interviewee H). The disaster gave civil society organizations new tasks and a new awareness (cs interviewee L). Obviously, the government was in need of help for the reconstruction of the country, and this left some space for a new role for civil society. Paul Jeffrey argues, for example, that the military's permanent emergency committee (COPECO) proved to be inefficient and not capable of dealing with the emergency situation (Jeffrey 1999). Jeff Boyer also notes the impressive response of the grassroots:

> Emergency neighborhood committees sprang up over night to counter looting and to organize the search for food, water and medicine, while nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) worked side-by-side with local groups and international agencies to coordinate relief efforts (Boyer 1999).

The response of civil society organizations to the emergency was impressive (Boyer 1999; dc interviewee F). When Mitch struck, many development NGOs already existed and proved to be prepared to work for the reconstruction. Development organizations that were already established had better qualifications than the government. While the government was bogged down in administration and corruption, civil society responded rapidly (cs interviewee X). In one survey, inhabitants of Tegucigalpa, Choluteca and El Progreso were asked about the role and the performance

of the different actors during the emergency. The actors that were singled out as functioning well were the Catholic Church, the mass media, other churches and neighborhood associations. According to the results of the survey, these actors clearly played a more important role than municipalities and the government. Political parties and the Congress were perceived to have the lowest performance (Foro Ciudadano, *Propuesta para la reconstruccion y transformación nacional*, 1999; cs interviewee I). The organizations also showed that they had considerable knowledge of the importance of the political work after the immediate disaster relief (dc interviewee F).

When hurricane Mitch struck, its devastating consequences came as no surprise to civil society organizations who had long warned about the consequences of natural disasters. Mitch hit the North Coast on October 28, 1998. It was not the hurricane itself that caused the total devastation, but rather the torrential rains that followed the hurricane. Settlements along the hillsides, in combination with a slash-and-burn agricultural system, had caused extensive deforestation. When the water came, the settlements were swept away, together with mud, stones, roads and bridges. The consequences are incomprehensible—in Honduras 6,000 people died, 8,000 disappeared, 12,000 were injured and 1.5 million people were displaced.[12] About 100,000 homes were destroyed. Material losses were estimated at around US$ 3.6 billion, and 70 percent of the harvest—mainly coffee and bananas—was lost. Enormous amounts of physical infrastructure—bridges, buildings, roads and water pipes—were destroyed. It was not only Honduras that was affected. In Nicaragua, about 3,000 persons died, 40,000 homes were destroyed and the infrastructure was damaged. El Salvador and Guatemala were not equally affected (Sida, *Efter orkanen Mitch*, 2000).[13]

The Washington Meeting

Shortly after the disaster, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) arranged a Consultative Group meeting for donors and government representatives from Central America in Washington, on December 10-11 (*Consultative Group Meeting for the Reconstruction and Transformation of Central America*). At the meeting it was pointed out that the disaster

provided a unique opportunity to rebuild a new and better Central America. The region needed not only physical reconstruction but also societal transformation to reduce social and ecological vulnerability. The Consultative Group decided to arrange a meeting with all donors and Central American governments in Stockholm in May 1999. For this meeting, each and every one of the affected countries was supposed to write a plan for national reconstruction that should be presented to the donors. From the very beginning, the donor community emphasized the need of civil society participation in the reconstruction process (e.g. Sida, *Turning Disasters into Opportunities*, 1999: 32). However, this was not an easy process.

Escalating Conflicts

The time between the Washington meeting in December 1998 and the meeting in Stockholm about six months later reveals many interesting things about civil society, the government's strategy towards civil society, cooperation and co-optation. With hurricane Mitch, Honduran civil society transformed itself into a new powerful actor. For one thing, civil society was more united after Mitch (cs interviewee with J; cs interviewee M; dc interviewee C). Several observers have described Honduran civil society as divided (e.g. Biekart 1999: 212), but when confronted with a disaster that affected all parts of society, civil society was united. In the reconstruction process, civil society organizations became more visible and vociferous. The new power of civil society did not emerge by the creation of new organizations, but because existing organizations joined old and new umbrella groups (*foros*). These new umbrella organizations were visible in the media and active in society at large, and they raised (at the time) a single voice for the structural changes that, according to them, were a necessary part of the reconstruction work (dc interviewee C; ps interviewee C).

But, in spite of civil society's new strength, or perhaps because of the new strength, the period between the Washington meeting and the Stockholm meeting was not a time of smooth cooperation between civil society and the government. Rather, this six-month period was characterized by a fight between civil society and the Flores government (cs interviewee P; cs

interviewee S). Flores' repressive leadership style has been identified as one reason for the conflict. Flores controlled the process in a repressive and centralistic way, and was intolerant towards those who had another opinion (cs interviewee P; see also Jeffrey 1999 for the same argument). Flores created a special Reconstruction Cabinet, headed by Gustavo Alfaro, which was supposed to write the master plan for reconstruction required by the Consultative Group. But, despite promises in Washington, the government was not willing to let civil society participate in the development of the reconstruction plan (cs interviewee P). The conflict thus originated from the government's attempt to control the reconstruction process and the civil society's attempt to be included in the reconstruction work (cs interviewee S). Civil society organizations were anxious to participate, especially as there were apprehensions that the government would focus on reconstruction rather than transformation, and that the process probably would be characterized by corruption and turn out to be something that the elite could profit from; the lost opportunity of reconstruction after Hurricane Fifi was still in peoples' memories (e.g. Foro Ciudadano, *La ciudadanía pide la palabra* 1999: 12-15; see also Jeffrey 1999). Civil society fought hard to be able to participate. The government's position was ambiguous. One respondent describes the government's position as positive towards cooperation, but not willing to let somebody else decide the priorities (cs interviewee C).

It was obvious that the government and the civil society organizations engaged in this process had different visions. Civil society's position was that reconstruction without a deeper transformation of the existing structures in the country would be a waste of money, because it would only be a question of time before a similar disaster occurred again. For civil society, the most important thing was to implement radical social, political and economic reforms (Foro Ciudadano, *Propuesta de reconstruccion y transformación nacional*, 1999; Interforos, *Propuesta de Interforos para la reconstrucción y transformación nacional,* 1999). In various articles, documents and seminars, civil society organizations sent a clear message that the country needed a deep structural change.[14] With the meeting in Stockholm approaching, civil society organizations—particularly Foro Ciudadano and Interforos (a civil society network

consisting of 14 different foros that had been founded in December 1998)—tried to convince the government to write a reconstruction plan which would lay the groundwork for a better country. Foro Ciudadano and Interforos tried to convince Flores of the importance of focusing on issues such as citizen participation, decentralization, transparency, sustainable development, environmental protection and poverty alleviation (Jeffrey 1999). However, Flores and Alfaro (head of the Cabinet for Reconstruction) were not interested:

> The government was not interested in suggestions from Interforos and the Citizen Forum, claiming it got civil society feedback from the National Convergence Forum (FONAC). Yet FONAC, which is controlled by political parties, functions merely as a rubberstamp for government policies. Flores alternately ignored and attacked Interforos and Citizen Forum, rattled the saber of regulation over uppity NGOs, and then tried coopting some of the protagonists, offering three Citizen Forum leaders top-ranking government jobs (Jeffrey 1999).

FONAC was the only part of civil society that the government consulted (cs interviewee P). FONAC is an organization created by the government, which is supposed to serve as an arena where the government and civil society can meet (ps interviewee E). From the very beginning, though, FONAC was highly controlled by the government. Most members of civil society regard FONAC as a government-controlled organization that is not representative of civil society (cs interviewee P; cs interviewee T; and cs interviewee V). By consulting FONAC, Flores could say that he let civil society participate in the reconstruction. Consequently, the master plan for reconstruction was developed in secret by the Cabinet for Reconstruction (Jeffrey 1999). By the end of April, less than a month before the meeting in Stockholm, only a summary of the plan had been circulated (cs interviewee P; RDS-HN, *Cronología*, 1999). Not even FONAC had received the complete text (RDS-HN: *Cronología*, 1999). In sum, then, despite promises of cooperation, the government excluded civil society from participation in the development of the master plan for reconstruction. Naturally, this behavior provoked strong feelings within civil society.

In the midst of the escalating polarization, a new conflict between civil society and the Flores government appeared. The Human Rights Commissioner Leo Valladares had investigated the management of the emergency assistance after Mitch, and found 17 cases of possible abuse of the funds (Jeffrey 1999). On April 20, the Congress voted for a reform of the Commissioner's mandate. The reform implied a restriction of the mandate so that the Commissioner's only task was to examine the complaints about human rights abuses that the office received. The mandate was also restricted in time, from six to four years. In practice, the reform implied that the Commissioner could no longer investigate cases of corruption. However, the reform provoked an immense reaction from politicians, civil society and representatives from the international community.[15] It was interpreted as a coup against democracy. It also seemed to be a widespread belief that the decision to restrict the mandate was a form of revenge because of Valladares' report. Valladares himself said that the reform would result in a weakened institution that would lose the right to investigate mismanagement within the administration and abuses committed by civil servants (Jeffrey 1999). Faced with this immense critique, Pineda Ponce, President of the Congress, announced a new vote on April, 27. The same day several civil society organizations gathered outside the Congress to protest against the reform. The Congress reconsidered the reform and voted again, this time to leave the mandate unchanged (Jeffrey 1999; RDS-HN, *Cronología*, 1999; dc interviewee D).

Preparations for the Stockholm Meeting

As many civil society organizations feared that the government would focus on short-time (the remaining time of Flores' mandate) reconstruction rather than long-term transformation, several groups in civil society decided to write their own reconstruction plans. Foro Ciudadano presented its plan for national reconstruction and transformation in April 1999. In the proposal, the umbrella organization emphasized the opportunity to create a new, more tolerant, more democratic and more participatory Honduras. Foro Ciudadano's report concentrated on the reconstruction as a process that should not be limited to the physical

reconstruction, but a process that should aim at improving the quality of life for all Hondurans. The report also emphasized the importance of strengthening democracy, of creating a culture for transformation, of increasing transparency and citizen control, of promoting alleviation of poverty and of increasing equality. Moreover, the importance of respecting the environment and creating sustainability were underlined. In addition, the report stressed the importance of a political and electoral reform, including a judicial reform (Foro Ciudadano, *Propuesta de reconstrucción y transformación nacional*, 1999). Interforos also wrote a proposal for reconstruction and transformation. By April 1999 Interforos represented around 500 different civil society organizations, including Foro Ciudadano (Jeffrey 1999). Interforos' proposal shares the fundamental principles of transformation, democratization, transparency and sustainable development with Foro Ciudadano's plan, but is longer on issues such as health, housing and environmental protection (Interforos, *Propuesta de Interforos para la reconstrucción y transformación nacional*, 1999).

The government's master plan for reconstruction and transformation (PMRTN) was finally presented in late April (RDS-HN, *Cronología*, 1999). The plan focused on rebuilding the physical infrastructure. There were of course parts of the plan that dealt with poverty, environment and popular participation, but the lion's share was concerned with the reconstruction of roads, airports, ports, the financial sector and telecommunications (Gabinete para la Reconstrucción, *Plan maestro de la reconstrucción y transformación nacional*, 1999). Not surprisingly, criticism was voiced against the plan. Interforos, for example, criticized the plan and said that it was more of a plan for the government than for the nation. The government was not happy with this development and one government official said that opposition against the government's master plan could be harmful, because it would make the country look divided and this could destroy the country's image before the Stockholm meeting (RDS-HN, *Cronologia,* 1999; Jeffrey 1999)

However, one week before the Consultative Group meeting in Stockholm, Flores invited Foro Ciudadano to a meeting. This invitation was a way to show the donor community that he had consulted civil society. The meeting resulted in a joint statement that there would be

transparency in the government's handling of international aid, decentralization and support for local governments, and that the social and environmental vulnerability would be reduced (Jeffrey 1999; RDS-HN, *Cronología*, 1999). Thus, with the agreement with Foro Ciudadano, Flores, who still ignored Interforos, could say that he had consulted civil society. Julieta Castellanos from Foro Ciudadano argued, according to Jeffrey, that the joint statement gave Foro Ciudadano the possibility to say that the government has to comply with the promises agreed upon (Jeffrey 1999).

The Stockholm Meeting

On May 23-24, two days before the Consultative Group meeting, Forum Syd organized an international NGO gathering in Stockholm. The topic of the conference was the reconstruction and transformation of Central America and civil society organizations from Central America, Europe, Canada and the USA attended this parallel conference. It was an opportunity for many organizations that were not invited to the Consultative Group meeting to discuss the reconstruction process. The representatives of the Central American organizations emphasized the importance of strengthening democracy, of increasing transparency in the management of public resources, of reducing the social and physical vulnerability of the region and of creating socially, politically and economically sustainable development. Other themes that were brought up at the conference were, for example, civic participation, decentralization, access to land, poverty alleviation and the foreign debt (RDS-HN, *Sociedad civil de Centroamérica hace sun primera presentación en Estocolmo*, 1999). The meeting resulted in a joint declaration and recommendations for the reconstruction process (*Declaración y Recomendaciones Encuentro Internacional de ONGs*, 1999).

On May 25-28, the Swedish government together with IDB organized a Consultative Group meeting in Stockholm, where the Central American governments, including the Honduran government, presented their plans for reconstruction and asked for financial support (Jeffrey 1999). The Consultative Group listened for five hours to the presentation by the Cabinet for Reconstruction. The only representative from civil society that was invited was FONAC. After the presentation, the donors had the

opportunity to ask questions, and the Honduran delegation was asked questions concerning how the government was going to secure transparency in the management of resources, how decentralization of power was to be put into practice, how the participation of every sector of civil society was going to be realized and how the government was going to create links to development NGOs and other sectors in civil society to ensure real citizen participation. Moreover, the Consultative Group wanted to know how the government was going to handle disaster mitigation, and what the specific actions were to deal with access to land (RDS-HN, *Presidente Flores presenta su plan de reconstrucción y transformación*, 1999; cs interviewee P). Thus, despite Flores' presentation, the donors were not convinced by the strategies for civil society participation, access to land, and transparency in the management of the resources, i.e. exactly the themes that Foro Ciudadano and Interforos emphasized in their reconstruction plans. With regards to civil society participation, the Honduran delegation answered that FONAC constituted a maximum of representation as it was composed of every sector in civil society. The Cabinet for Reconstruction also maintained that a major part of civil society had agreed on the plan. In addition, they asserted that they were prepared to find a compromise with the rest of civil society (RDS-HN, *Presidente Flores presenta su plan de reconstrucción y transformación*, 1999).

The message from the donors was that leaving civil society outside the reconstruction work was not a good strategy to obtain more resources (RDS-HN, *La sociedad civil, un fantasma que vaga por Estocolmo*, 1999). After the presentation, Interforos sent a letter to Flores, in which they expressed their disappointment that their plan was excluded a priori, and that the plan presented therefore was a plan of the government, not of the country (RDS-HN, *Interforos expresa sus puntos de vista sobre la reunión de Estocolmo al Presidente Flores*, 1999). Hence, Flores was criticized by all parties involved and was thus in desperate need of civil society support. After a Swedish diplomat had convinced him, Flores personally approached Mauricio Díaz Burdett, head of the Interforos delegation who attended the parallel NGO conference, and asked him to participate (Jeffrey 1999; cs interviewee P). As a result, five members of Interforos[16] were invited to participate in the Consultative Group meeting (RDS-HN,

Transparencia y participación, las palabras claves en Estocolmo, 1999). Thus, Flores could say that the plan was a joint proposal of the government and civil society (cs interviewee P).

The donors tried to surpass each other, and one respondent describes the situation as a competition of who would pledge most support, even though they knew that too much money could be harmful (dc interviewee F). Finally, US$ 2.6 billion was promised by the donor community, including debt relief, loans and grants with conditions attached (Jeffrey 1999). The meeting resulted in the so-called Stockholm Declaration, which constitutes the general agreement between the donors and the Central American governments on the principles that are supposed to guide the reconstruction work. The Stockholm Declaration states that the region should not only be reconstructed but must also be transformed. Moreover, international aid must be focused on long-term solutions that concentrate on the fundamental causes of poverty and vulnerability (Consultative Group, *The Stockholm Declaration*, 1999). The following principles are supposed to guide the reconstruction:

- Reduce the social and ecological vulnerability of the region as the overriding goal.
- Reconstruct and transform Central America on the basis of an integrated approach of transparency and good governance.
- Consolidate democracy and good governance, reinforcing the process of decentralization of governmental functions and powers, with the active participation of civil society.
- Promote respect for human rights as a permanent objective. The promotion of equality between women and men, the rights of children, of ethnic groups and other minorities should be given special attention.
- Coordinate donor efforts, guided by priorities set by the recipient countries.
- Intensify efforts to reduce the external debt burden of the countries in the region (Consultative Group, *The Stockholm Declaration*, 1999).

The Stockholm follow-up group, initially referred to as the ”Group of Five”, was created to follow and evaluate the work and to ensure that the

objectives of the Stockholm Declaration were reached (Sida, *Turning Disasters into Opportunities*, 2002: 36).[17]

When the Stockholm meeting was concluded, Flores had promised to let civil society participate, and also promised a transparent management of the funds. A transparent use of the funds involves high visibility, and citizen access to information. Thus, Flores had committed himself to real civil society participation, and not only to consulting FONAC. However, Flores soon fell back into a traditional behavior of co-opting civil society, albeit with subtle means.

The Civil Society Participation Commission

According to an evaluation made by Oxfam, the reconstruction has worked more smoothly in Honduras than in neighboring Nicaragua. In Nicaragua, President Arnoldo Alemán's government was more openly hostile towards the civil society, and a political crisis provoked by the politicization of the Controller General's Office contributed to the problems. The political pact between the governing Liberal Party and the Sandinistas in opposition also obstructed a reconstruction with active civil society participation (Oxfam, *After Hurricane Mitch*, 2001: 15). The Flores administration has, albeit reluctantly, created some space for civil society participation in Honduras. The so-called Civil Society Participation Commission (Comisón de Participación de la Sociedad Civil) was created on the initiative of the government on August 23, 1999, three months after the Stockholm meeting (Decree No. 047-99). The Civil Society Participation Commission was supposed to be the central channel for citizen participation in the reconstruction process, and its formal task was to act as an advisory body to the president and provide follow-up to the reconstruction plan (Oxfam, *After Hurricane Mitch*, 2001: 31). Different groups were represented in the Commission: The Chambers of Commerce of Tegucigalpa and San Pedro Sula, the Association of mayors (AMHON), FONAC, Interforos and Foro Ciudadano.

> Under Swedish leadership, the donor coordination group began regular meetings with members of the Participation Commission,

> achieving some notable successes in pressuring the government of Honduras for greater consultations with civil society […] (Oxfam, *After Hurricane Mitch*, 2001: 31).

But the cooperation within the Participation Commission has not been without friction. The coordinator and spokesman of the Commission, Antonio Tavel Otero, is also the president of Tegucigalpa's Chamber of Commerce (Cámara de Comercio e Industrias de Tegucigalpa, CCIT) and this has provoked tensions (dc interviewee D).

One example of the tensions within the Participation Commission was the discussions that took place at the follow-up meeting in Tegucigalpa in February 7-8 2000, when Foro Ciudadano and the 36 organizations that are included in the foro suddenly withdrew from the Commission. The reason was that the umbrella organization did not agree with the document that Tavel Otero presented to the Consultative Group. According to Foro Ciudadano, their suggestions for a real transformation were not included; only the suggestions made by FONAC and CCIT were incorporated into the document. Foro Ciudadano stated in an open letter in the daily newspapers that their proposals on transparency, on civil society representation in the reconstruction process and particularly on the access to land and forestry resources, had been ignored (Foro Ciudadano, *Sin reforma político-institucional…¡No puede haber transformación!*, 2000). The umbrella organization maintained that for a real transformation to take place, a political-institutional reform including a reform of the judicial system, a reform of the electoral system, a modernization of the legislative process, and a decentralization and modernization of the state administration must take place. Foro Ciudadano, however, had the impression that the government still emphasized reconstruction rather than transformation. They believed that their presence in the Commission would not engender any significant changes (Foro Ciudadano, *Sin reforma político-institucional…¡No puede haber transformación!*, 2000).

Foro Ciudadano claims that they struggled for the Civil Society Participation Commission not to be just another meaningless organization, but that there were persons within the Commission who were

engaged in delaying tactics. Therefore, the final document presented to the Consultative Group did not bring up central and, for the transformation, necessary elements, such as a reform of land and forestry resources. Foro Ciudadano claimed that there was no political will to implement any of the changes that they had proposed (Foro Ciudadano, *Sin reforma político-institucional…¡No puede haber transformación!*, 2000). In addition, members of Interforos also announced that they would withdraw unless they could see results that would actually benefit the Honduran people. Interforos' representative Mauricio Díaz Burdett said that the government, as well as the donor community, pretended that everything was going fine, even though the situation in the country was still very bad. Díaz Burdett also said that, despite the agreement in Stockholm, the resources had been directed to reconstruction rather than transformation. Interforos claimed that the government had not paid enough attention to issues such as access to land and use of forestry resources (*El Heraldo* 09.02.00; *La Tribuna* 09.02.00). The evaluation made by Oxfam shows that so far, the proposals from civil society have not been included in the policies and, consequently, not implemented (Oxfam, *After Hurricane Mitch*, 2001: 31). Hence the Participation Commission cannot discuss the structural problems in the country, because discussions like this are censured, and as a result, Interforos' participation in the Commission has decreased over the last few years (cs interviewee P).

The Civil Society Participation Commission reveals two main problems. The first concerns the internal disagreements within the Commission. The peasant leader Marvin Ponce argued that workers, peasants and indigenous groups did not agree with FONAC and CCIT (*La Tribuna* 08.02.00; *El Heraldo* 08.02.00). It is certainly no surprise that the business sector and peasant movement do not agree on issues related to access to land, and that the popular organizations clash with government-controlled FONAC. Thus, by including FONAC and the business sector, represented by the Chambers of Commerce of Tegucigalpa and San Pedro Sula, Flores managed to keep control over the reconstruction process and to avoid radical suggestions from the Commission. The second problem that the Participation Commission illustrates is the lack of political will to implement reforms that would actually imply a true transformation of the

country. Civil society organizations have argued that it would be futile to rebuild the infrastructure unless radical social, economic and political reforms were implemented. The government has agreed to some concessions to make sure that they will obtain continued financial support. One example is the establishment of the Civil Society Participation Commission, as a means to institutionalize civil society participation. However, as it has turned out, this has not resulted in an efficient participation, but rather in a controlled form of participation.

Foro Ciudadano's withdrawal was a statement that formal civil society presence is not enough; they wanted to avoid a situation where their participation would have been institutionalized as a process that would never produce any results. Foro Ciudadano wanted the different groups in civil society to be incorporated in the reconstruction work, with influence over the priorities, but also with shared responsibility. Foro Ciudadano claimed that a commission was not enough to ensure civil society participation, and that the government had to actually listen to the proposals from the Participation Commission (Foro Ciudadano, *Sin reforma político-institucional…¡No puede haber transformación!*, 2000).

At the follow-up meeting in Tegucigalpa, the international community reaffirmed its strong support for the work to reconstruct and transform the country (Consultative Group, *Press Release* 08.02.00; *La Tribuna* 09.02.00; *El Heraldo* 08.02.00). President Flores presented a progress report of how the reconstruction work was proceeding and assured the Consultative Group that his government was still committed to the Stockholm Declaration. The donor community praised the progress and Miguel Martínez from the Inter-American Development Bank, who chaired the meeting, said that Honduras was "going forward on the right path". The donors stressed the importance of maintaining macroeconomic stability. They also emphasized the importance of effective and sustainable transparency in the management of the resources, maintaining an independent judiciary and separation of the three branches of government. They also concluded that Honduras continues to be vulnerable to natural disasters and that poverty and ecological degradation are intimately linked (Consultative Group, *Press Release* 08.02.00; dc interviewee B; *El Heraldo* 08.02.00). Overall, the follow-up meeting came to focus a lot on the

foreign debt, and the donor community encouraged the government's efforts to qualify for the enhanced HIPC program, which includes developing a poverty reduction strategy together with civil society (Consultative Group, *Press release* 08.02.00). In sum, the Consultative Group did not express any major dissatisfaction with the reconstruction process or the level of civil society participation. The review of Swedish post-Mitch support expresses satisfaction with the follow-up process. Among other things, the report states that the follow-up process has "facilitated a legitimate space for civil society participation in the elaboration of strategic national plans and vitalized and broadened public debate concerning what kind of development should be attempted" (Sida, *Turning Disasters into Opportunities*, 2002: 37).

Civil Society in the Reconstruction Process—A Concluding Remark

Civil society has been an important counterpart in the reconstruction process. In addition to the agenda-setting function that civil society had at an early stage, civil society has provided its expertise in the implementation and evaluation of projects. For example, when the government decided to concentrate on the physical reconstruction of the country, civil society organizations wrote proposals that emphasized the importance of a transformation of society. The proposals by civil society could thus have been seen as complementary to the government's master plan. However, Flores' government, and especially the Cabinet for Reconstruction headed by Alfaro, did not appreciate civil society's suggestions, as they wanted to maintain control over the reconstruction process.

The example of the reconstruction process illustrates not only the capacity of civil society to act as a counterpart of the government, but also the unwillingness of the government to let civil society participate. Moreover, perhaps as a strategy to comply with the demands from the Consultative Group, the government tried to formally include civil society in the reconstruction work. By creating a Commission for Civil Society Participation, the government satisfied the demands from the donor community. Compared to the Commission's equivalent in Nicaragua—Consejo Nacional de Planificación Económica Social (CONPES)—

there have been more meetings between the government and civil society in Honduras (Oxfam, *After Hurricane Mitch*, 2001: 31). But, the question is whether civil society has actually gained more influence. Foro Ciudadano and Interforos claimed that they did not feel that their participation in the Commission was meaningful. For the Flores administration it has been easy to comply with the donors' demands by creating commissions in which civil society can be included. Civil society is officially consulted but, in practice, little attention is given to its proposals. Paradoxically, then, civil society gets an officially better position but the real effects are that civil society loses its power as an oppositional force or countervailing power.

Civil Society, the State and the Donor Community

Civil society's multiple functions in the post-transition context embrace both what Michael W. Foley & Bob Edwards label Civil Society I and Civil Society II (1996). Civil society in post-transition Honduras has both been a countervailing power, or antidote to the state, and a source of support for the state. Both the potential countervailing power and the state-supporting version are visible in all functions analyzed here. However, in the transition phase the countervailing power is definitely more evident than in the post-transition period. Yet it seems as if the countervailing power and the state-supportive functions of civil society are inseparable in practice.

How, then, has civil society contributed to democratic development in the post-transition period? Chapter Eight sketched a gloomy picture of the post-transition situation in Honduras and, against this background, civil society has managed to contribute to democratic development. For example, by raising issues concerning the institutional deficits of the new democracy, civil society has contributed to improved political institutionalization. The demands for judicial reform resulted in a new procedure for nominating the magistrates for the Supreme Court. The demands for electoral reform have been included in President Maduro's reform program, and this opens the way for an electoral reform (Sida, *Utvecklingssamarbetet med Honduras*, 2002). A number of civil society organizations work explicitly with training and capacity building of both ordinary citizens and politicians and civil servants, e.g. police officers. However, we

do not know anything about the results of these educational activities, and this is not the place to speculate on how effective they are. For the purpose of this study it is sufficient to note that these kinds of activities take place. Civil society also plays an important role by representing and aggregating interests, and three new parties have emerged and now participate in the electoral arena. This broadens representation and increases competition in the elections. Civil society has also contributed to increased regime performance in the development area, by participating in the design and implementation of the projects administered by FHIS, and in the reconstruction process after hurricane Mitch.

Obviously, civil society does not act in a vacuum. The examples of the various functions have demonstrated that two factors clearly affect civil society's democracy-building potential: the political context and the international society in terms of donor influence. Let us now examine how these factors have facilitated or constrained civil society in post-transition Honduras.

Strategies to Control and Manipulate Civil Society

Civil society faces the difficult task of interacting with political society, for example by acting as a counterpart or as an agenda setter, and at the same time remaining an autonomous power. Obviously, civil society can never be completely autonomous, but there is an omnipresent peril that the government will try to include or co-opt civil society, and thereby reduce its countervailing power. It has traditionally been a strategy of the Honduran elite to accommodate civil society in order to avoid conflict (Schultz 1992). The Honduran political elite has clearly been more tolerant towards popular movements in order to prevent radicalism and violence than its neighbors Guatemala and El Salvador. By favoring certain groups in civil society, the political elite has also managed to split the popular movements. This pattern has prevailed after the transition from authoritarian rule. The first democratically elected government did not interact much with civil society. Rather, President Suazo gave his tacit approval to repression of popular movements and human rights organizations. Human rights groups confronted the regime, but never gained

much influence. During the second democratically elected government, civil society became more visible, but still lacked influence. However, from the end of the 1980s and onwards, a difference became perceptible. During President Callejas' presidency civil society gained more strength and started to challenge the government. It was especially human rights violations and military impunity that were in focus, but the neo-liberal reforms implemented by Callejas also met with strident criticism from civil society. This trend has continued and civil society has, in the past decade, become a vociferous and highly visible actor. Civil society has been a fierce critic of the government, but has also served as an important agenda setter, counterpart and source of new political alternatives and of democratic education.

The administrations of Callejas, Reina and Flores thus had to find strategies to deal with this stronger force in society. Interestingly enough, these strategies show considerable resemblance to the strategies of authoritarian regimes. Perhaps the description that would best fit these strategies is a form of co-option. Through different mechanisms to include civil society, a confrontation has been avoided. Salomón, Castellanos & Flores, for example, found that protests were more intense in the first year in both the Callejas and the Reina administration. After the first year, processes of dialogue or concertation were initiated. These processes were attempts to avoid confrontation and assure governability (Salomón et al. 1996a: 114; Salomón 1998b: 62-79).[18]

These processes of concertation are an expression of traditional Honduran state-society relations. In this context, one respondent argues that, historically, the government has taken control over the organizations and that there is a culture of manipulation in Honduras, which is reflected in the government's strategies to manipulate civil society (cs interviewee N). The strategy to invite civil society has been even more discernible in President Flores' government. He used both FONAC and the Civil Society Participation Commission as means to control civil society, and it can be regarded as an example of what Dryzek (1996) refers to as inclusion of civil society, when organizations gain insight but no influence. Let us therefore take a closer look at these organizations.

FONAC was formally created in 1994, but its work did not begin until

1998. Initially, the working agenda was educational reform and citizens' legal rights (*seguridad ciudadana*). The task was to draft proposals to the government after having consulted the population in municipalities, the mass media, experts and institutions. But FONAC is not supposed to focus on details, only on the broader issues (ps interviewee E). FONAC's status is highly disputed—it is debated whether it is part of civil society or of the government. Flores claimed to have had consulted civil society after having had discussions with FONAC. Thus, Flores' government clearly sees FONAC as part of civil society. In their view, the organization embodies the interests represented in civil society and is an independent organization (ps interviewee A). Another government official argues that there is not a clear-cut division between political society and civil society in Honduras. It is something of a gray zone. FONAC is a channel through which civil society can communicate with the government and vice versa. FONAC is thus seen as a process of negotiation between the government and civil society that aims at coordinating views and at reaching an agreement (ps interviewee D).

By contrast, Jeffrey argues that FONAC is merely a rubberstamp for government policies (1999). This view is strongly supported by many civil society organizations that perceive the organization as a part of, or indistinguishable from, the government. According to them, it is not a representative or open forum (cs interviewee P; cs interviewee T; cs interviewee V). The president controls the organization by appointing the secretary, and the secretary reports directly to the president (ps interviewee C). Moreover, it has repeatedly been argued that the government uses FONAC to find out whether civil society agrees or disagrees with the policies of the government and FONAC's proposals are considered if they correspond to the government's policies; otherwise they are rejected (cs interviewee T; cs interviewee V). Several organizations or persons representing organizations have dissociated themselves from FONAC because they have felt they were being used or perceived it to be just another strategy of the government to legitimize its politics (cs interviewee V; dc interviewee C; Jeffrey 1999). But not all voices from civil society are critical; some believe that FONAC plays an important role (cs interviewee Z). It has also been argued that the first secretary of FONAC was more independent than anyone would have imagined (particularly Flores) (dc

interviwee C). To summarize, the government and civil society seem to have different opinions regarding FONAC. Whereas government officials consider FONAC to be part of civil society, civil society organizations perceive it to be a politically controlled body.

FONAC was supposed to be a representative instance of civil society, but soon became a forum where the government officially informs and consults civil society. Exactly the same thing happened with the Civil Society Participation Commission, according to one interviewee. The government gradually assumed control over the Commission (ps interviewee H). However, the story of the Civil Society Participation Commission cannot be properly understood unless the donor community's influence is taken into consideration. Flores needed civil society participation to secure continued international support. It was clearly stated at the Stockholm meeting that civil society participation in the reconstruction process was a requirement for continued financial support. Consequently, Flores created a commission that was supposed to act as an advisory body to the president and to ensure that the guiding principles of the Stockholm Declaration were followed. By letting the business sector be represented through the Chambers of Commerce of Tegucigalpa and San Pedro Sula, and having the politically controlled FONAC participate, Flores managed to control the Participation Commission. It was no surprise that the organizations within the Commission had internal differences, given their composition. With the Civil Society Participation Commission, Flores formally included civil society, but it did not gain any influence. Foro Ciudadano left the Commission when they realized that they could never agree on central issues such as access to land and forestry resources. But Flores had managed to demonstrate his good will to the donor community, and thus gained legitimacy.

In the past decade, civil society has emerged as an important actor. The political elite has responded to this challenge by using the traditional strategy of including civil society. And by institutionalizing civil society participation they also reduced civil society's capacity to act as a countervailing power. The question is what the consequences are for democracy and civil society's potential to contribute to democratic development. Foro Ciudadano's decision to leave the Commission, and Interforos' threat to

follow that example, indicates a growing awareness of civil society, and a desire to maintain autonomy.

In addition to the attempts to take control of civil society, there is an omnipresent peril that the government will dump the responsibility for policy initiatives and implementation of social services on civil society.[19] As a response to the Honduran governments' deficient attempts to deal with the problems caused by the low level of socioeconomic development, civil society has emerged as the perhaps most important provider of support for the most vulnerable groups in society. As a consequence, civil society has acquired considerable expertise. There is of course a risk that the state will exploit civil society, particularly the development NGOs. Several organizations claim that the government is relying upon civil society organizations to deliver social services in areas related to health, infrastructure and education (cs interviewee K; cs interviewee O; cs interviewee Q; cs interviewee N). However, there seems to be an awareness of this problem and, according to one respondent, the organizations do not accept being hired as contractors (cs interviewee Y). But there are also voices in civil society that claim that this is not a problem. For example, one interviewee argues that on several occasions when civil society organizations wanted to do things through their existing structure, the government has taken over the projects. There have also been cases when the government has initiated activities to organize people, even though this type of activity has already been carried out by civil society organizations (cs interviewee Z).

This is a delicate problem. On the one hand it is important to have an active civil society that manages to direct attention to issues that the government avoids, but civil society cannot be the only agenda-setting actor, nor the only agent responsible for implementing projects. If civil society organizations were to be the main providers of micro credits, literacy campaigns, or support to weak sectors in society, there would be inadequate supervision. Civil society is not always the quick fix to the problems related to development (see e.g. Tvedt 1998: 6).[20] Another problem concerns the risk that the organizations become politicized by being too intimately involved with the government and consequently lose their autonomous position.

The Impact of Civil Society Assistance

Foreign aid has clearly had an impact on Honduran civil society, particularly in the post-Mitch period when the donors almost tried to outshine each other in their promises to pledge support for the reconstruction process. However, it has been a mixed blessing. Civil society participation in the reconstruction process was one of the guiding principles for the Consultative Group, and at the Stockholm meeting Flores was questioned concerning his strategies for letting civil society participate (RDS-HN, *Presidente Flores presenta su plan de reconstrucción y transformación*, 1999). It seems to be a widespread belief that it was pressure from the donor community that eventually forced Flores to approach civil society. As a result, the Civil Society Participation Commission was created. Opinions about the Participation Commission vary. Whereas the evaluation made by Oxfam is quite critical, Sida's evaluation reaches a more positive conclusion (Oxfam, *After Hurricane Mitch,* 2001; Sida, *Turning Disasters into Opportunities,* 2002). This study concludes that the Commission has contributed to institutionalization of civil society participation but, in practice, undermined its countervailing power. Of course, civil society must also take responsibility for this development. The organizations demanded a commission to evaluate the reconstruction work (dc interviewee H). But probably the demands of the donor society were more important to Flores than the demands of the organizations. Without the donor community's strong emphasis on civil society participation in the reconstruction process, a Commission would probably not have been created. However, it seems clear that the external pressure for civil society participation has been effective in the sense that civil society has at least been formally consulted. Even though civil society's possibilities to influence policies have not increased, the organizations are at least informed (dc interviewee B).

Development assistance has of course meant several possibilities for organizations to develop and implement their projects. The period preceding the NGO gathering in Stockholm was marked by intense civil society activity, and eventually, a regional civil society network—Centroamérica Solidaria (CAS)—was formed. Several private aid agencies participated in and supported this NGO gathering and the preparatory work of the organizations. External support was also valuable to human rights organizations

like CODEH in the 1980s. Given the repressive context, human rights organizations could not receive domestic financial support. However, as Biekart points out, by not questioning the lack of internal democracy, the development assistance hampered the necessary reorganization (1999: 235):

> Due to 'overfunding' of organisations in civil society whose leadership was not held accountable by its members, private aid sometimes contributed to further weakening this internal accountability (Biekart 1999: 298).

Attempts to strengthen civil society in Central America have often resulted in reinforced hierarchy, weakened accountability and a centralized and elitist leadership (Biekart 1999: 299). It is important to emphasize that it is not the aid that creates undemocratic organizations, but given the strong traditions of caudillo rule, *personalismo* and verticalism, it might reinforce these tendencies.

Clearly, much of the development assistance, particularly projects such as FHIS, tend to support development NGOs rather than membership organizations. There is thus a risk that the donor community contributes to an expansion of these "private development institutes" at the expense of popular organizations. And when assistance is flowing into the country, it is inescapable that flippant organizations in the development business emerge (Lofredo 2000; cs interviewee J; *La Tribuna* 28.03.99). Hence civil society aid seems to have been a mixed blessing for Honduras.

Summary

This chapter has demonstrated that civil society has been an important actor for crafting democracy in post-transition Honduras. It seems paradoxical that the Honduran civil society that was considered strong in the pre-transition period, at least in a regional perspective, played such a limited role in the transition. However, in the post-transition period, civil society has reemerged as a strong social force. During authoritarian rule it was the traditional popular forces, such as peasants' and workers' movements that formed the strong civil society. But through different

strategies of inclusion and attempts to split the popular movement, the regime tried to control civil society. In the post-transition period new organizations, e.g. human rights organizations and organizations concerned with women's rights, emerged as the most visible and vociferous actors. The emergence of a new generation of civil society organizations was probably caused by the new regime's many democratic deficits, especially in the human rights area.

Civil society in Honduras seems to have an important function as an educator in the post-transition period. Civil society organizations are engaged in training ordinary citizens, politicians, civil servants and military officers. This study does not provide any answers considering the effects of the educational activities, but several organizations seem to have rather ambitious education projects. Possibly, civil society has also been an arena where citizens have had the opportunity to practice democracy. This should not be overestimated, however. A substantial part of civil society consists of development NGOs (or intermediary NGOs) that do not have the same kind of popular participation as the membership organizations. In addition, several civil society organizations are characterized by informal practices that do not encourage participation.

Perhaps the most important function of civil society in the Honduran post-transition period has been the capacity to act as an agenda setter. Honduran civil society organizations have played an important role by calling attention to issues that politicians have avoided or neglected. The dominance of the traditional political parties, in combination with the pact making during the transition phase, has hindered certain issues from appearing on the political agenda. However, civil society has managed to call attention to questions such as civil-military relations, human rights abuses, military impunity and a weak judicial system. Moreover, civil society organizations have also stressed the need for an electoral reform and the rights of the indigenous groups in the country. Through campaigning in media and by public information campaigns, civil society observed these issues and managed to mobilize the mass public. Civil society also capitalized on the reconstruction work after hurricane Mitch and managed to attract attention to the urgent need of altering existing structures in society. Whereas Flores' government emphasized the recon-

struction of the physical infrastructure, civil society brought up issues such as poverty, access to land and forestry, the need of judicial and electoral reform and environmental protection. But civil society also served as a counterpart in the reconstruction process. According to many observers, civil society organizations were more prepared to deal with an emergency situation and had more expertise, especially at the community level, than state agencies. Being a source of expertise, especially as regards development work, civil society organizations have been able to assist the government. Civil society participated, for example, in designing and implementing FHIS projects. With the assistance of development NGOs social services could be expanded. Thus, civil society helped to improve performance in a very important field.

Civil society also contributed to democratic development by being a source of new political alternatives. More specifically, it contributed to the emergence of new political parties. Even though these new parties have not become major political forces, they represent a welcome challenge to the traditionally dominant bipartisan system by improving representation and competition in the electoral arena. However, transfer of leadership from civil society to political society is more unusual. Perhaps the absence of such a transfer is a sign of a certain skepticism of the political sphere within civil society.

Civil society's democracy-building potential has clearly been affected by the political context. When civil society became stronger and louder, the government invited civil society to participate in different forms of cooperation. This has been most obvious under Flores' time as president. Flores used both FONAC and the Civil Society Participation Commission as forums for including civil society. Hence, Flores could claim that he had consulted civil society, but in practice it was only a limited part of civil society that was actually represented in these commissions. Moreover, Flores avoided radical suggestions by inviting the business sector and FONAC to participate in the Civil Society Participation Commission. Not surprisingly, peasants clashed with landowners, for example, and by this composition of representatives of civil society Flores could be certain that civil society would not be a strong and united social force. By these invitations to participate, civil society was officially consulted but received

hardly any influence. Thus, the Honduran case clearly illustrates that any attempt to analyze civil society's democracy-building potential should start by examining the surrounding political context and the strategies towards civil society. Flores was anxious to include civil society, not so much because he believed that he needed it, but because the donor community demanded civil society participation in the reconstruction process. Civil society participation was a condition for continued external support. Thus, in order to understand the dynamics of civil society participation, and the political society's attitude towards civil society in an aid-recipient society, the external dimension must be taken into consideration.

Notes

1 This is, however, disputed. It has been argued that despite the fact that Honduras had a better chance of developing a dynamic civil society—with no civil war and with the important social reforms—Honduran civil society has stagnated. By contrast, in Guatemala there is a consensus that things must change, and this contributes to a dynamic civil society. It is particularly the indigenous organizations that are strong (m/a interview A). See e.g. Gálvez Borrell et al. (1997) for an analysis of the Maya movement.

2 According to the last housing and population census, 473,531 persons identify themselves with an indigenous group (7.2 percent). According to the census, 63,5 percent claimed to be Lenca, 10,5 percent to be Garífuna, 11,7 percent to be Miskito, and 7.8 percent to be Chorti. There are also smaller groups of Tawahka, Pech (Paya), Tolupan and English Afro-Caribbean (from the Bay Islands). This census is based upon subjective answers (*Honduras this week*, 04.11.02, online edition 42).

3 The UN Commission on Human Rights' Special Rapporteur conducted a mission to Honduras in 2001 and found a large number of alleged cases of extrajudicial executions of children. The Special Rapporteur identifies security forces as responsible for a number of the killings (UN Commission on Human Rights, 2002).

4 Recall the discussion from Chapter One, in which it was argued that in the donor discourse and often in the Honduran civil society discourse, NGOs are seen as synonymous with development NGOs or private development organizations.

5 In fact, many "old" organizations have acted within various umbrella organizations such as Interforos.

6 Diakonia, one of CODEH's major funders, withdrew their support for the committee in the late 1990s due to the lack of internal democracy and weak administrative capacity. The decision to end the cooperation with CODEH was taken after a long period of discussions.

Diakonia implemented a participatory external evaluation to identify the key obstacles, and on the basis of this evaluation Diakonia suggested a structural reform. Custodio agreed to reform the committee but never did. At that point, when Custodio did not keep his part of the agreement, Diakonia decided to end the cooperation. However, this must be understood in the light that it was not the fact that Custodio refused to reorganize the internal structure, but that CODEH had proved to be unwilling or unable to adjust to a new democratic context that caused the decision (dc interviewee F; dc interviewee C).

7 Alvarado works for the peasant organization CNTC, which helps *campesinos* to get land, credit and technical assistance, and defends them against the landowners and the military (Alvarado 1987: 86). In *Don't Be Afraid Gringo* (1987) Alvarado describes her life as a *campesina* and the struggle with CNTC to improve the conditions of the poor rural majority in Honduras.

8 COFADEH is also engaged in a process of training and educating women. Moreover, the organization works with a program of legal assistance, and has trained public prosecutors. COFADEH also trains students and cooperatives with special focus on issues related to democracy and human rights (COFADEH, *Memoria—Diez años educando en derechos humanos*, 2001).

9 In the latest elections to the Congress (2001) PINU received 4.6 percent of the votes, PUD received 4.5 percent and PDCH, finally, received 3.7 percent (Tribunal Nacional de Elecciones, http://www.tne.hn).

10 For a discussion of NGOs' involvement in agricultural projects in Central America, see e.g. Kaimowitz (1993).

11 The informal sector credit program (Programa de Apoyo al Sector Informal—PASI) aims at reducing un- and underemployment, increasing production and productivity, and increasing income and employment in the informal urban sector. PASI provides credit and training through intermediary organizations. Another program, Programa de Crédito y Asistencia Técnica para Micro-Empresas Rurales (PROCATMER), gives credit and technical assistance to rural *microempresas*. The infrastructure program is divided into social and economic infrastructure projects. Social infrastructure concerns health, schools, water etc., and economic infrastructure more traditional infrastructure (World Bank, *The Participation of Nongovernmental Organizations in Poverty Alleviation*, 1995: 6).

12 Figures vary. These figures were presented in the government's *Plan maestro de la reconstrucción y transformación nacional* (1999).

13 In El Salvador about 250 persons were killed, and 49,000 persons were evacuated. In Guatemala around 300 were killed, and almost 100,000 were evacuated (Sida, *Efter orkanen Mitch*, 2000).

14 See Foro Ciudadano, *La ciudadanía pide la palabra* (1999) for a collection of articles and open letters that were published in the daily newspapers.

15 Reactions came from politicians such as ex-President Rafael Callejas, Olban Valladares from PINU, and Matias Funes from PUD, and from several civil society organizations. The private business sector COHEP (Consejo Hondureño de la Empresa Privada) criticized the reform on the basis that it sent the wrong message to the international community. International actors such as Dinamarca pro-derechos also expressed their displeasure.

16 Mauricio Díaz Burdett (FOSDEH), Fransico Machado (ASONOG), Jorge Alberto Gonzalez (FOPRIDEH), Gilberto Rios and Clemetina Garcia Espana (Red de Mujeres) (RDS-HN, *Principales acuerdos logrados entre el Presidente Carlos Flores y el espacio de Interforos*, 1999).

17 From the beginning the Group of Five was constituted of Canada, Germany, Spain, Sweden and the USA. Later, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, the European Union, the Inter-American Development Bank, the IMF, the World Bank and UNDP (United Nations Development Program) have also been included in this group (Sida, *Turning Disasters into Opportunities*, 1999: 36).

18 *Concertación* or concertation refers to a broad policy coalition that involves both political and social actors, e.g. political parties and labor unions (Uggla 2000: 4; see also Przeworki 1991: 180-187).

19 It is important to note that this discussion concerns the autonomy of civil society in a newly established democracy, and is not a normative discussion of whether a welfare state or private contractors should have the responsibility of delivering social service to the citizens.

20 See Tvedt for a discussion of NGOs' comparative disadvantages in development work (1998: 135-137).

Chapter Ten

Crafting Democracy?

> Democratization is ultimately a matter of political crafting (Di Palma 1990: 8)

The idea of civil society as a democracy-strengthening actor has attracted vast interest in the past decade. This study therefore sets out to analyze under which circumstances civil society can contribute to democratic development. More specifically, the research question guiding this study was: *How can we understand civil society's democracy-building functions in post-transitional societies?* In this concluding chapter, the empirical and theoretical arguments will be summarized and further discussed. The implications of the conceptual framework will be scrutinized, and the chapter raises a number of suggestions for future research.

A considerable number of all countries that initiate a transition to democracy end up in a gray zone between democracy and authoritarianism (see e.g. Schedler 2002). They often lack the structural qualities that are considered important for a well-functioning democratic system that is perceived as legitimate by the citizens. The fact that many transitions result in hybrid democracies rather than full-fledged democracies illustrates that the process of democratization is much more complex than the transition theories have assumed (Carothers 2002). In cases like these, it is political crafting that can make the difference between survival and breakdown of a democratic regime (Linz & Stepan 1989: 41). No country is doomed to remain a pseudo-democracy façade democracy or hybrid democracy. But the task of crafting democracy becomes even more important in cases where the structural qualities assumed to be conducive to democratic development are absent (Di Palma 1990: 9). It is, of course, important not to fall into an excessive voluntarism. Clearly, there are

certain structural conditions that restrict or enhance the options available to the actors engaged in democratic crafting.

Who, then, are the actors that could craft democracy? This study has focused on one particular actor—civil society. Certainly civil society is made up of multitudinous, and sometimes conflicting, interests. And, clearly, not every civil society organization has an interest in developing democracy. Yet, it seems reasonable to argue that at a certain level of abstraction we might refer to "civil society". Other actors, e.g. politicians, civil servants and donors, can of course also contribute to democratic development and, consequently, this study does not provide a complete picture of the democratization process. It is rather an attempt to tell the story from a civil society perspective, and the study concludes that under certain circumstances civil society can have an important democracy-building function.

Civil Society and Democratic Development in Honduras

Honduras' democratization process was initiated in the early 1980s. Like many of the transitions to democracy that are part of Samuel P. Huntington's so-called third wave of democratization (1991), the new democracy was fragile, weak and demonstrated several democratic shortcomings. Before the transition, Honduras was ruled by different authoritarian regimes, civil or military, which combined social reforms with repression of popular movements. The ruling elite allowed some space for civil society organizations, at least in comparison with the neighboring countries, but also managed to manipulate and control parts of civil society. Civil society does not stand out as any particularly visible democracy-promoting actor in the transition process. Due to the nature of the non-democratic regime, civil society did not emerge as an important actor that pressed for a transition to democracy. More specifically, this study has shown that it was the relative restraint of the authoritarian regime, in combination with inclusive strategies and attempts to split civil society, which undermined civil society's countervailing power. There was never any strong united front or popular uprising that urged a democratic

transition. Hence, the transition is best described as one initiated and guided by the ruling elite, with elements of pressure from the USA. After the transition, human rights abuses increased due to the regional crisis. When the political context changed, new organizations emerged and civil society developed into an important countervailing power that criticized the government's tacit approval of the militarization of the country, human rights abuses and military impunity.

In the late 1990s, the transition to democracy was finally completed when the military came under civilian control. However, the new democracy is still fragile due to weak political institutionalization, low performance and low support for the democracy. In the post-transition period, civil society has been an important agenda setter, which has attracted attention to issues related to the democratic quality, such as human rights, the judicial system and the electoral process. As elected politicians, for various reasons, have not managed to place these issues on the political agenda, civil society had an important agenda-setting function. In this regard, the donor community has supported civil society organizations. Demands for judicial reform, for example, have been expressed by civil society organizations, by bilateral donors and by the World Bank. In addition, civil society organizations have also contributed to civic education, another kind of activity that has been supported by the donor community. We are not in position to assess the effects of the educational efforts, but several organizations are engaged in education both at the elite and at the mass public level. However, given the lack of democratic structures in many organizations, learning by doing or the informal practice of democratic rules should not be taken for granted.

Civil society is of course also an important source of pluralism in general, and of new political alternatives in particular. Given the bipartisan character of the party system, and the electoral machine nature of the two traditional parties, civil society had an important function as an opposition power in society. The new political parties can be said to have their origins in civil society. Interestingly, the small political parties are, in the Honduran discourse, often regarded as part of civil society, whereas the two traditional parties are regarded as part of the political society. This seems to support the argument that civil society can generate new political alternatives. However, a new democratic

leadership has not been recruited from civil society organizations. Finally, civil society has been a counterpart of the government particularly in development related areas. Civil society organizations, particularly development NGOs, possess important competence in several areas, something that became evident in the reconstruction work after hurricane Mitch.

To what extent civil society organizations have been interested in, and been allowed to perform, these democracy-building functions is dependent on the broader political setting. The case of Honduras illustrates that when the political context has been unfavorable, civil society has been more of a countervailing power, and when it has been favorable, civil society has focused more on state-supporting activities. However, the political context is much more complicated than this; through different strategies the state (both authoritarian and democratic) has tried to undermine the countervailing power of civil society.

Honduras is also an exceedingly illustrative example of the impact of development assistance. The donor community has incontestably facilitated the work of many organizations by their support. Yet it is quite evident that it is a certain set of activities that are encouraged and as a consequence, development NGOs and advocacy groups are those organizations that seem to benefit the most from development assistance. Nevertheless, the case has clearly shown that civil society aid or the idea of "funding virtue" is a mixed blessing, as the demands for civil society participation undermined civil society's countervailing power in the post-Mitch era.

The democracy-building functions that have been described as important in this study are of course dependent on the selection of organizations examined. Different kinds of organizations obviously have different interests and, consequently, engage in different kinds of activities. Thus, it is no surprise that development NGOs, for example, are more likely to function as a counterpart of the government than advocacy groups, which are more likely to act as agenda setters. However, one objective of this study has been to analyze different kinds of organizations, even though the new generation of organizations has been the focus in the post-transition period.

What can we learn from the case of Honduras and how can the knowledge acquired from this study be of any general use? As argued in the introductory chapter, a single case is always viewed "in the theoretical context of a larger

number of cases" (Lijphart 1975: 160). The conclusions presented here are valid only for the case of Honduras, but let us turn to a more general discussion of the theoretical ideas that we have acquired from the case.

Implications for the Study of Civil Society and Democracy

Democratization researchers enthusiastically welcomed the resurrection of the concept of civil society in the 1980s. Civil society appeared as a catchword in democratization studies, and like many other catchwords it went from being welcomed with uncritical enthusiasm to being fiercely criticized. What is particularly interesting about the concept of civil society is that it has been subject to a wide range of interpretations in political theory and, consequently, has several different meanings. In many democratization theories, civil society was regarded as a key component in the democratization process, particularly in the post-transition period. The future stability for a newly established democracy was dependent on a vital civil society, it was often argued. However, the idea of civil society soon became subject to widespread criticism; it was argued that civil society meant all and nothing, that the concept had been stretched beyond recognition and that it provided only tautological reasoning.

As this study shows, civil society can play an important role in the process of crafting democracy. However, we definitely need to refine our conceptual tools to be able to understand civil society's functions. In the transition period, civil society can contribute to democratic development by being a countervailing power and promulgating a democratic orientation of reforms. However, it is important to note that only as long as civil society organizations have a commitment to democracy will they advocate a democratic orientation of the reforms. Yet civil society may still act as a countervailing power, regardless of its internal democracy or whether the organizations are interested in democracy. In the post-transition period, civil society's democracy-building functions are more complex and constitute a mix of supporting and countervailing power functions. Four such functions have been identified here: agenda setter, educator, source of new political alternatives and counterpart. There are, however, a number of factors that seem to affect civil society's democracy-building potential.

The levels of internal democracy and civility in civil society organizations affect civil society's democracy-building potential. It is particularly the Tocquevillian notion, today advocated by Neo-Tocquevillians, that civil society organizations may serve as schools of democracy, that is constrained by the internal levels of democracy. Thus, if we want to understand how civil society can strengthen democracy by a process of learning by doing, it is crucial to consider the degree of democracy within civil society organizations if we want to avoid tautological reasoning. How this can be done remains a methodological challenge to democratization studies. One particularly challenging feature, as the Honduran case illustrates, is that many organizations are formally democratic but, in practice, these formal structures co-exist with authoritarian traditions, e.g. clientelism. Just like in political societies in many newly established democracies, there is a gap between formal democratic structures and informal practices. This problem clearly needs to be examined, and one challenge is to develop the appropriate methodological tools.

This study has emphasized the importance of the political context. Civil society does not emerge from or exist in a vacuum, but is formed by the broader state-societal relations. Taking the political context into account is therefore necessary for our understanding of civil society's democracy-building potential. The character of the authoritarian regime affects civil society and its role in the transition to democracy. A civil society is more likely to develop in an authoritarian system compared to a totalitarian system. If the non-democratic regime is relatively tolerant towards the popular sectors, and uses different strategies to control or to co-opt civil society organizations, they may be less inclined to demand democratic reforms. Moreover, if the strategies to control civil society have included attempts to split civil society it will, in the same vein, be less prone to set their differences aside in order to act collectively for a transition to democracy. The Honduran case shows how the reformist military regime in the early 1970s successfully co-opted and managed to split peasant and labor organizations. Consequently, these sectors became less radical, and less concerned with urging a change. Thus, there was no united front for a political change, and the transition was initiated and guided by the governing elite. However, when human rights abuses increased in the late

1980s, civil society emerged as a fierce critic of the regime. But, it was not the old organizations that reacted against the deteriorating human rights situation but new ones that had developed as a response to the political situation. This raises two interesting questions; is the emergence of new civil society organizations a requisite for an altered relationship between the state and civil society? And, is the emergence of new organizations necessary to preserve civil society's countervailing power function?

The strategies of the governing elite, particularly the strategies that a government might use to control or manipulate civil society, are equally as important in a democracy as in the pre-transition period. The case of post-transition Honduras involves several examples of how the government has included civil society and thereby managed to undermine its potential democracy-strengthening function as a countervailing power. Through subtle means, civil society is being manipulated, and this strategy has been used by both authoritarian and democratic governments in order to avoid opposition. This problem has not been sufficiently acknowledged by democratization studies, the reason being that the focus has been on the society-centered view of civil society rather than on the state-centric view of civil society. As a result, then, the relationship between state and civil society has not attracted much attention. It seems, however, that democratization studies' understanding of civil society would be more complete if the relation to the state was given more attention. The state can facilitate as well as obstruct civil society's potential for crafting democracy, and the theoretical propositions must acknowledge this relation.

This study has shown that traditions of controlling and manipulating civil society can be pervasive and survive transitions to democracy. Thus, by examining the prior regime type and the historical relations between the state and civil society, we can gain better understanding of civil society's democracy-building potential. Moreover, this study has emphasized that formalized civil society participation, e.g. through semi-political commissions, is not always preferable to vociferous opposition from "outside", i.e. organizations that have successfully maintained their independence. When civil society participation is being institutionalized, there is a risk that civil society will become included and lose its countervailing power. The solution to gaining a better understanding of this is not to shift the focus to the Hegelian state-centered view of civil

society, but rather to develop the theoretical propositions of the state-civil society relationship from the liberal society-centered perspective. This study has provided some new ideas in this direction.

In the past decade it has been obvious to most observers that democratization is not a domestic affair, but rather likely to be affected by international factors. In the same fashion, civil society has been treated by the democratization literature as chiefly a domestic phenomenon. This is clearly misleading. For one thing, transnational networks of civil society organizations, such as Amnesty International, Greenpeace, and Jubilee 2000, have gained importance in the past decades. Moreover, democratization processes take place in an international context, often with pressure and conditions from the donor community. More specifically, many donors orient development projects to civil society and support civil society as a method to promote democracy in the Third World. Thus, civil society and its democracy-building functions in newly established countries in the Third World cannot be understood unless the international dimension is taken into consideration. The more policy-oriented NGO literature has long had this international perspective, but democratization studies still lack theories that—in a systematic fashion—take the international context into account. This study has suggested some proposals of how the international dimension can be integrated into the study of civil society in the democratization process. The case of Honduras has shown the impact of development assistance and has also illustrated the difficulties involved in supporting civil society. On the one hand, international support has strengthened some organizations and been of great importance for civil society's democracy-building functions. On the other hand, external support has affected civil society's autonomy from the state negatively. Demands for civil society participation can reinforce the tendency of co-optation. As the case examined here shows, some commissions and semi-governmental organizations have emerged not as a response to the demands from the grassroots but as a result of the donors' demands for increased civil society participation in the political process. These commissions and organizations are political constructions rather than citizens acting collectively in order to defend or to promote an interest. However, establishing organizations to comply with the donors'

demands and to gain legitimacy may in the long run undermine civil society and its democracy-building potential.

Support for local civil society may also undermine democratic development, as it might affect the autonomy and the legitimacy of the political institutions negatively. A newly established democracy with low performance in combination with high expectations of the citizens can be weakened if it is confronted with a vociferous civil society with far-reaching demands. This delicate situation may create tensions that can be deepened if the donor community too strongly emphasizes the importance of strong civil societies. It may actually create irreconcilable interests that in the long run could be harmful to the capacity of the state. This problem is often accentuated by an absence of democratic experience. State and civil society are then often seen as irreconcilable elements and, if the donor community places too much emphasis on civil society's virtues, political institutions might be regarded with skepticism.

The relation between development assistance, civil society and democracy needs to be further investigated. This study has provided some tentative theoretical ideas. However, theory development should not be "colored by the events of the day", that is, be too influenced by short-time events so that, when confronted with a more lasting empirical reality, they stand out as redundant (Malloy 1987: 235). A study like this inevitably stresses recent developments and events and, consequently, there is a risk that "events of the day" stand out as more important and having a more lasting effect than they turn out to have. Thus, a note of caution is needed; the theoretical propositions that this study has generated are only tentative ideas.

To sum up, the conceptual framework outlined in this study proved to be a satisfactory tool to analyze civil society's democracy-building functions in Honduras. It illustrated well certain processes, but it also generated new questions. The framework is particularly concerned with the difficulties that new democracies face, and with international influence in terms of the donor community's influence. Consequently, it best fits aid-receiving countries. However, given that most newly established democracies are to be found in low-income countries—in Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Eastern part of Europe—many of the new democracies are recipients of foreign aid. With the radical changes of the

international structure—the global expansion of countries that are ruled by democratic principles and by donors who in the post-Cold War era have become recipients of development assistance—there is a considerable number of cases that the framework outlined here could apply to. In the midst of a global expansion of countries in transition, we need better understanding of the process of democratization, particularly of democratic development in post-transition societies and civil society's functions in this process. This study has generated some new ideas concerning civil society's democracy-building functions that might be worth exploring.

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Arguete, Giovanni, Consejo Nacional de los Derechos Humanos, Tegucigalpa (07.04.99).

Armador, Suyapa, Movimiento de Mujeres por la Paz "Visitación Padilla", Tegucigalpa (16.02.00).

Avila, Leonidas, Director Ejecutivo, Instituto para la Cooperación y el Autodesarrollo, Tegucigalpa (23.02.00).

Ávilar, José Leon, Presidente, Federación de Organizaciones Privadas de Desarrollo de Honduras, Tegucigalpa (30.10.01).

Bourdeth Tosta, Julio, Director, Colegio de Médicos, Tegucigalpa (05.11.01).

Cárcamo, Carlos Rolando, Director Ejecutivo, Asociación Cristiana de Desarrollo Integral y Emergencia, Tegucigalpa (15.02.00).

Chavarria, Daysi, Coordinadora, Asociación Nacional de Mujeres Campesinas, Tegucigalpa (31.10.01).

Diaz Burdett, Mauricio, Coordinador de Programas, Foro Social de Deuda Externa y Desarrollo de Honduras, Tegucigalpa (23.03.99).

Domínguez de Coello, Yolanda, Directora Ejecutiva, Fundación Hondureña de Rehabilitación y Integración del Limitado, Tegucigalpa (18.09.00).

Ekman, Ellenor, First Secretary, Sida, Tegucigalpa (22.02.00).

Eriksson, Ina, Desk Officer for Honduras, Sida (RELA), Stockholm (25.02.99).

Funes, Miguel Angel, Foro de Convergencia Nacional, Tegucigalpa (30.10.01).

García, Emilia, Grupo de Apoyo Mutuo, Guatemala City (19.03.99).

Gonzalez, Jorge Alberto, Director Ejecutivo, Cooperación Technica Nacional, Tegucigalpa (30.03.99).

Greene, Duty, Senior Economist, USAID, Tegucigalpa (03.03.00).

Hernández, Maria Sofia, Directora Ejecutiva, Federación de Desarrollo de Honduras, Tegucigalpa (28.09.00).

Hernández, Maria Sofia, Coordinadora de la Participación de la Sociedad Civil, Partido Nacional, Tegucigalpa (14.10.01).

Hung, Guadeloupe, Vice Ministra, Secretaría Técnico y Cooperación Internacional, Tegucigalpa (02.11.01).

Lagos, José Maria, Diputado Suplente, Partido de Innovación National y Unidad, Tegucigalpa (23.10.01).

Leiva, Carlos, Representante Legal, Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo, Tegucigalpa (22.10.01).

Lilja, Per, Project Director, PMU Interlife, Stockholm (05.11.02).

Machado, Francisco, Presidente Ejecutivo, Asociación de Organismos No Gubernamentales, Tegucigalpa (23.03.99).

Martínez, Conrado, Coordinador, Comisión de Derechos Humanos de Guatemala, Guatemala City (18.03.99).

Martínez, José, Instituto Hondureño para el Desarrollo Comunitario, Tegucigalpa (17.02.00).

Martínez, Juán Ramón, Columnist, La Tribuna, Tegucigalpa (05.11.01).

Mejía, Norma, Directora de Programas, Comisión Cristiana de Desarrollo, Tegucigalpa (27.09.00).

Méndez, Olga, Vice Ministra, Fondo Hondureño de Inversion Social, Tegucigalpa (22.10.01).

Méndez, Wilfredo, Coordinador para la Programa Participación Ciudadana, Centro de Investigación y Promoción de los Derechos Humanos, Tegucigalpa (11.02.00).

Menocal, Andres, Coordinador General para la Programa de Capacitación Municipal, Universidad Tecnológica Centroamericana, Tegucigalpa (06.04.99).

Meza, Eda, Centro de Derechos de Mujeres, Tegucigalpa (05.04.99).

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Misselem Rivera, Nora, Centro de Derechos de Mujeres, Tegucigalpa (05.04.99).

Molina, Victor Hugo, Vice Ministro, Secretaría de Turismo, Tegucigalpa (18.10.01).

Mora, José Jesús, Gerente General, Fundación Católica para la Comunicación Social, Tegucigalpa (06.11.01).

Morales, Ileana, Interforos, Tegucigalpa (21.09.00).

Oliva, Bertha, Coordinadora General, Comité de Familiares Detenidos en Honduras, Tegucigalpa (01.10.01).

Ottosson, Peter, Desk Officer for Central America, Diakonia, Stockholm (05.11.02).

Pereira, Wilmer, Caritas de Honduras, Tegucigalpa (25.03.99).

Reina, José Maria, Vice Ministro, Secretaría de Trabajo y Seguridad Social, Tegucigalpa (26.10.01).

Robberts, Jan, Counsellor for Development Cooperation, Sida, Tegucigalpa (22.02.00).

Sandberg, Svante, Head of NGO Division, Sida (SEKA), Stockholm (14.11.02).

Sevilla, Roberto, Director Ejecutivo, Formento Evangélico para el Progreso de Honduras, Tegucigalpa (14.02.00).

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Soto, Emilio, Partido Unificación Demócrata, Tegucigalpa (05.11.01).

Tock Quiñonez, Rosa, Universidad Rafael Landívar, Guatemala City (17.03.99).

Tidström, Gunnar, Desk Officer for Honduras, Sida (RELA), Stockholm (04.11.02).

Vasquez, Adelina, Coordinadora del Programa de Desarrollo Empresarial, Centro de Desarrollo Humano, Tegucigalpa (15.02.00).

Velasquez, Julio, Comité para la Defensa e los Derechos Humanos de Honduras, Tegucigalpa (25.03.99).

Velasquez Leticia, Administradora del Programas & Marlyn Espinal, Coordinadora del Programa de Genero y Ingresos, Proyecto HOPE, Tegucigalpa (26.09.00).

Zúniga, Orestes, Director Nacional, Compassion Internacional Honduras, Tegucigalpa (23.10.01).

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