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Franziska Blomberg:

External Democracy Promotion of Civil Society in Ethnically Fragmented Post-Socialist Countries

About the author:

Franziska Blomberg holds an MA degree in cultural studies from the European-University Viadrina, Frankfurt (Oder)/Germany. Currently she is writing her Ph.D. (first year) and is enrolled in the doctoral research programme 'Civil society and external democratization in post-socialist Europe' (a cooperative effort between Viadrina and ETH Zürich/Switzerland). The present paper treats the main assumptions of her thesis, but excludes the topic of social capital and generalized trust, which are treated in more depth in the thesis. Her main research interest is how diversity and its effects can be dealt with constructively on different levels (political, societal, cultural, communicational, etc.). In addition, Franziska gives trainings and workshops in international exchange, project management and consulting NGOs.

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Abstract

This paper argues that the importance of ethnic fragmentation has been underestimated in external democracy promotion of civil society. Practical democracy promoters are increasingly complaining that donor resources have been perpetuating the development of a civil society 'business sector' rather than promoting the development of democratically functioning organizations capable of functioning as role-models and democracy-learning arenas. Furthermore, the 'moral purity' projected upon civil society does not provide immunity against ethnicized functioning. Some authors argue that nation-building has to be given a much higher priority, especially in ethnically heterogeneous countries.[1] Ethnic diversity is often assumed to negatively influence democratization *per se* (see e.g. discussions referring to Huntington's writings). However, there must be some factors to explain why some ethnically heterogeneous countries seem to contradict this assumption.[2] In the aftermath of ethnicized conflicts, societal fragmentation often hampers democratization on all levels of society. This is why it is so crucial to support the democratic development of civil society, the arena where social and democratic values are learned.[3] If these values are tainted by a strong ethnic bias, the society in question, including its civil society actors, can hardly progress beyond the state of a hybrid system that falls somewhere between authoritarianism and democracy. Despite the repeated emphasis of the importance of civil society, academic models provide only crude categories for analysis. Whereas (often grass-roots oriented) peace- and conflict-research theories sometimes emphasize the importance of contextual factors for civil society, comparative political science theories tend to focus on the political system and hence do not provide detailed models for civil society (often roughly defined and enumerated as one of many elements of democracy). On the other hand, international relations theories tend to address the societal context a little more.[4] This paper attempts to integrate elements from these three theoretical approaches and from practical democracy promotion theory in order to assess the quality of democratic functioning in civil societies that are contextualized in ethnically fragmented societies. To this end, I ask, *How does the choice of strategy regarding the promotion of state- vs. nation-building in external democracy promotion influence the degree of democratic functioning of civil society?*, and test the following hypothesis: *The less external democracy promotion insists on non-ethnically defined nation-building, the fewer resources for promotion of civil society will be applied to overcome ethnic fragmentation, thus lessening the possible effects of democratization.* In an explorative manner, inspired by Steven M. Fish[5], the paper is structured as a qualitative comparative case study. Macedonia and Bosnia-Herzegovina were selected as the two case studies because they both exhibit high degrees of ethnic fragmentation but differing levels of de-

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[1]   Hippler, Jochen (ed.): Nation-Buidling. Ein Schlüsselkonzept für friedliche Konfliktbearbeitung?, Bonn: Stiftung Entwicklung und Frieden, 2004.

[2]   Bowen, John R.: The Myth of Global Ethnic Conflict, in: Journal of Democracy, 1996 (Vol. 7), No. 4, pp. 3–14, here p. 11.

[3]   Compare Narayan, Deepa: Bonds and bridges. Social capital and poverty, Washington D. C.: The World Bank, 1999; Putnam, Robert: Bowling alone. The Collapse and Revival of American Community, New York/NY: Simon & Schuster, 2000, here pp. 22–23, 338.

[4]   See e.g. Pevehouse, Jon C.: Democracy from the Outside-In? International Organizations and Democratization, in: International Organization, 2002 (Vol. 56), No. 3, pp. 515–549; Whitehead, Laurence (ed.): The International Dimensions of Democratization. Europe and the Americas, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996; Schneckener, Ulrich / Wolff, Stefan (eds): Managing and Settling Ethnic Conflicts Perspectives on Success and Failure in Europe, Asia, and Africa, London: Hurst, 2004, here p. xi; Zürcher, Christoph: Post-Soviet Wars. Rebellion, Ethnic Conflict, and Nationhood in the Caucasus, New York/NY: New York University Press, 2007.

[5]   Fish, M. Steven: Democracy Derailed in Russia. The Failure of Open Politics in Russia, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

mocratization. Because my research is not yet complete, only the preliminary results as well as an outline of the planned proceedings will be provided here. The initial results incorporate literature on the topic and the first explorative interviews. At this point, the two most likely answers to the research question are: 1) State-building is often given priority and necessary nation-building is neglected; and 2) either a) all actors are aware of the ethnic divide, but need to spend (donors)/receive (NGOs) democratization resources, so they ignore the existing ethnicized bias, or b) the ethnic divide is not as threatening as is often stated, but different actors exploit the issue so that outsiders will continue to provide resources.

1. Dark sides of democracy promotion of civil society. Can the rules of the game be changed?

For twenty years, the former socialist countries[6] (FSC) have been on the receiving end of external democracy promotion efforts[7].They have made varying degrees of progress on the path to democratic consolidation;[8] accordingly, they were often bluntly classified as either 'autocracies' or 'democracies' in the past.[9] In reality, however, many countries actually fall somewhere in between the two poles of authoritarianism and democracy. New research is suggesting more distinct classifications for these 'hybrid' forms of statehood,[10] in some cases attempting to provide more discrete categories for analysis in this 'grey' zone.[11]

Two of the factors that seemingly strongly influence democratization[12] are highlighted in this paper: civil society and ethnic[13] fragmentation[14]. They are often assumed to positively and negatively affect democ-

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[6]   Hereafter the term 'post-socialist' will be used as a category comprising all the countries sometimes also labelled 'post-Communist' or 'post-Soviet'.

[7]   Democracy promotion can be defined as 'all non-military measures, aiming at the establishment, strengthening, or restoration of a democratic, political order.' Measures of democracy promoters can be classified as negative or positive (among which falls the building of civil society), and it can use direct or indirect means of support for democratic processes. Leininger, Julia: Demokratieförderung, in: Nohlen, Dieter / Grotz, Florian (eds): Kleines Lexikon der Politik, München: Beck, 2006, pp. 67–71.

[8]   Freedom House: Nations in Transit. Democracy Score Year-To-Year Summaries by Region 2008, 2008, http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=437&year=2008, accessed 3 May 2009.

[9]   For a critical overview on this classification see Zinecker, Heidrun: Regime-Hybridity and violent civil societies in fragmented societies. Conceptual considerations, Cornell University Peace Studies, Occasional Paper, 2007, http://www.einaudi.cornell.edu/PeaceProgram/publications/occasional_papers/Zinecker-final.pdf, accessed 10 January 2008.

[10]   There is abundant literature about 'democracy', covering minimal to maximal, ideal-type-models. There is not enough room here for an extensive discussion. For this study, I follow the work of Zinecker (2007), who gives clear reasons about why many 'minimal types' should not be counted as democracies at all, and who includes a democratically functioning civil society as a crucial aspect of her definition of democracy. See Zinecker, Heidrun: Regime-Hybridity and violent civil societies in fragmented societies - conceptual considerations, Cornell University Peace Studies, Occasional Paper, 2007, http://www.einaudi.cornell.edu/PeaceProgram/publications/occasional_papers/Zinecker-final.pdf, accessed 10 January 2008.

[11]   See for example Collier, David / Levitsky, Steven: Democracies with Adjectives. Conceptual Innovation in Comparative Research, in: World Politics, 1990 (Vol. 49), No. 3, pp. 430–451; Bendel, Petra / Croissant, Aurel / Rüb, Friedbert (eds): Zwischen Demokratie und Diktatur. Zur Konzeption und Empirie demokratischer Grauzonen, Opladen: VS, 2002; Zinecker, Heidrun: Regime-Hybridity and violent civil societies in fragmented societies - conceptual considerations, Cornell University Peace Studies, Occasional Paper, 2007, http://www.einaudi.cornell.edu/PeaceProgram/publications/occasional_papers/Zinecker-final.pdf, accessed 10 January 2008; Diamond, Larry: Elections without Democracy. Thinking about Hybrid Regimes, in: Journal of Democracy, 2002 (Vol. 13), No. 2, pp. 21–35.

[12]   Sztompka, Piotr: Looking Back. The year 1989 as a Cultural and Civilizational Break, in: Communist and Post Communist Studies, 1996 (Vol. 29), No. 2, pp. 115–129; Price, Richard: Transnational Civil Society and Advocacy in World Politics, in: World Politics, 2003 (Vol. 55), No. 4, pp. 579–606; Haynes, Jeffrey: Comparative Politics in a Globalizing World, 2005,

ratization, respectively. As for civil society, many authors and practitioners stress the importance of a 'vibrant civil society' for sustainable democratic consolidation.[15] Usually, civil society is considered intrinsically 'good', with its 'dark sides'[16] conveniently overlooked.[17] However, recent years have seen increasing criticism of this sweeping optimism[18] and instances of 'bad', 'corrupt' or 'faked' civil societies'[19] have not been altogether rare. When considering ethnic fragmentation, ethnic heterogeneity is assumed to be a strong hindrance to democratization[20] and should therefore be given due consideration in democracy promotion.[21] Some authors argue that the effect of ethnic fragmentation depends more on how the competition between rivalling groups is dealt with.[22] Especially during radical changes, competing groups will tend to 'rent seek'. Thus, dealing with ethnic fragmentation and promoting cooperation across ethnic lines thus seem to be crucial measures for the progress of democratic consolidation.[23] This paper argues that external democracy promotion of civil society, despite good intentions, may actually run the risk of negatively impacting democratization if promoters underestimate the latent dangers of ethnic fragmentation.

The paper is structured as follows: first, the theoretical framework is presented, including reflections about the particular context of ethnically fragmented states for external democracy promotion. Then

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[   ] www.polity.co.uk/haynes/haynes-c1.doc, accessed 6 December 2007; Ottaway, Marina / Chung, Theresa: Debating Democracy Assistance. Toward a New Paradigm, in: Journal of Democracy, 1999 (Vol. 10), No. 4, pp. 99–113.

[13] Even though 'ethnicity' is a very contested category, due to lack of space I cannot give the term the attention it deserves, but I refer to subjective, constructed models of 'ethnicity' as imagined communities; see Anderson, Benedict: Imagined Communities, London: Verso, 1983.

[14] Ethnic fragmentation is understood here as ethnic heterogeneity by self-definition of the involved persons. A substantive discussion of indices, such as the one presented by Vanhanen, Alesina et al., and others exceeds the scope of this paper.

[15] See further Merkel, Wolfgang (ed.): Systemwechsel 5. Zivilgesellschaft und Transformation, Opladen: Leske & Budrich, 2000; Gillespie, Robert / Youngs, Richard (eds): The European Union and Democracy Promotion. The Case of North Africa, London: Cass, 2002; Parrott, Bruce: Perspectives on Postcommunist Democratization, in: Dawisha, Karen / Parrott, Bruce (eds): Politics, Power and the Struggle for Democracy in South-East Europe, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997, pp. 1–39.

[16] Paffenholz, Thania / Spurk, Christoph: Civil Society, Civic Engagement, and Peacebuilding, in: Social Development Papers, Conflict Prevention & Reconstruction, 2006 (Vol. 1), No. 36, pp. 1–47.

[17] Roth, Roland: Die dunklen Seiten der Zivilgesellschaft. Grenzen einer zivilgesellschaftlichen Fundierung von Demokratie, in: Geißel, Brigitte et al. (eds): Zivilgesellschaft und Sozialkapital. Herausforderungen politischer und sozialer Integration, Wiesbaden: VS, 2004, pp. 41–64, here pp. 60–61.

[18] See Lauth, Hans-Joachim: Ambivalenzen der Zivilgesellschaft in Hinsicht auf Demokratie und soziale Inklusion, in: Nord-Süd aktuell, 2003 (Vol. 2003), No. 2, pp. 223–232; Paffenholz, Thania / Spurk, Christoph: Civil Society, Civic Engagement, and Peacebuilding, in: Social Development Papers, Conflict Prevention & Reconstruction, 2006 (Vol. 1), No. 36, pp. 1–47.

[19] Tenčić, Kristina: Faking Civil Society? Eine Analyse des Beitrags der Europäischen Union zur Entwicklung der kroatischen Zivilgesellschaft und deren realer Verfassung, Frankfurt (Oder): unpublished BA thesis, 2009.

[20] See e.g. Zürcher, Christoph: Post-Soviet Wars. Rebellion, Ethnic Conflict, and Nationhood in the Caucasus; New York/NY: New York University Press, 2007.

[21] Beichelt, Timm: Minorities in New European Democracies. A Source of Destabilisation?, in: European Yearbook of Minority Issues, 2002 (2002/03), No. 2, pp. 52–71; Silander, Daniel: Democracy from the Outside-In? The Conceptualization and Significance of Democracy Promotion, Vaxjö: Vaxjö University Press, 2005.

[22] Putnam, Robert D.: E Pluribus Unum. Diversity and Community in the Twenty-first Century. The 2006 Johan Skytte Prize Lecture, in: Scandinavian Political Studies, 2007 (Vol. 30), No. 2, pp. 137–174; Fish, M. Steven: Democracy Derailed in Russia. The Failure of Open Politics in Russia, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

[23] Zürcher, Christoph: Post-Soviet Wars. Rebellion, Ethnic Conflict, and Nationhood in the Caucasus, New York/NY: New York University Press, 2007. For further discussion of 'rent seeking' see Zinecker, Heidrun: Regime-Hybridity and violent civil societies in fragmented societies. Conceptual considerations, Cornell University Peace Studies, Occasional Paper, 2007, http://www.einaudi.cornell.edu/PeaceProgram/publications/occasional_papers/Zinecker-final.pdf, accessed 10 January 2008.

the intention of the study and the guiding main question and research hypotheses are introduced. After a presentation of the planned operationalization, I end the paper with some preliminary conclusions.

2. How actors involved in civil society promotion perceive the strategic choices made regarding state- vs. nation-building; the intention of this study

Given the limited space, this research paper only humbly intends to come up with a few suggestions for instruments that might be useful for fine-tuning civil society promotion and expanding theories of civil society. Recent years have seen considerable (re-)ethnicization in the world, which does not inspire much hope of finding a 'miracle cure' – and nor do history and decades of research. In order to better grasp the myriad related processes, it is helpful to understand nations as categories of action[24] and to see them as both targets and consequences of 'social engineering' by different actors.[25] Seeing ethnicity as a constructed category – as in Anderson's 'imagined communities'[26] – renders it possible to see ethnicity as a constructed *process* when it becomes an all-important category – which is why I prefer to speak of 'ethnicized' conflicts rather than of 'ethnic' conflicts. This position also allows for the theoretical possibility of an active de-ethnicization of politics. This study follows the assumption that the close intertwinement of civil society promotion efforts and the appeasement of problematic ethnic fragmentation has thus far been greatly underestimated. In some cases, actors in the field can reveal important thoughts on this subject and very probably offer ideas on how to deal with ethnic fragmentation in a more constructive way. The aim is to provide some insight into this field in order to provide more adequate categories for assessment and instruments for civil society promotion in ethnically fragmented countries.

3. Democracy promotion, civil society, and ethnic diversity. A theoretical framework

Democracy cannot exist and certainly cannot improve unless the functioning of institutions (structure) is guaranteed by democratic values (the substance). One constituent element of democracy often called upon when democratization seems to falter is the existence of a 'vibrant civil society'[27]. This is based on the assumption that civil society is the sphere in which democratic values are internalized (in a Tocquevillian sense).[28] If the development of an 'ethnocracy' is to be avoided – or reversed – we have to consider that formally democratically functioning institutions (democracy as 'one man one vote') probably do not meet the above requirements and could actually serve to strengthen ethnicity as an omnipresent marker.[29]

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24   Brubaker, Roger: Nationalism Reframed. Nationhood and the National Question in the New Europe, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996, here pp. 16–18.

25   Hobsbawm, Eric / Ranger, Terence (eds): The Invention of Tradition, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983, here pp. 13–14.

26   Anderson, Benedict: Imagined Communities, London: Verso, 1983.

27   Król, Marcin: Where East meets West, in: Journal of Democracy, 1995 (Vol. 1), No. 6, pp. 37–43, here p. 39.

28   See e.g. Diamond, Larry: Rethinking Civil Society toward Democratic Consolidation, in: Journal of Democracy, 1994 (Vol. 5), No. 3, pp. 4–17, here p. 8.

29   Mullerson, Rein: Minorities in Eastern Europe and the Former USSR. Problems, Tendencies and Protection, in: The Modern Law Review, 1993 (Vol. 56), No. 6, pp. 793–811, here p. 811.

According to Linz/Stepan, democratic consolidation can only be achieved when democracy is seen as 'the only game in town'[30] and the 'will to democracy'[31]and democratic culture[32] prevails. Civil society is supposedly able to reinforce the process.[33] Hence, establishing a civil society is thought to be a precondition for functioning institutions and a gauge of the legitimacy of a democracy.[34] Civil society protects democratic institutions, restricts undemocratic behaviour of elites and helps to construct a safe basis in times of crisis for the democratic polity.[35]

3.1 Democracy promotion and civil society – haste makes waste?

As stated above, civil society is considered an important factor for democratization by theorists and practitioners alike. In keeping with O'Donnell et al.[36], Lauth/Merkel defined different stages of democratic transformation: liberalization, democratization, and (democratic) consolidation, stressing the importance of establishing a civil society at the latest stage.[37] In other words, it is difficult – if not impossible – for a state to develop towards democracy without a developing civil society; it is more likely to 'get stuck' somewhere along the way. Dahrendorf argues that democracy in Eastern Europe cannot be considered secure until at least two generations, or sixty years, have elapsed.[38]

However, '[D]espite the widespread recognition of its potential importance, scholars have not agreed on how to define [civil society], nor are they sure what the specific nature of its contribution can be.'[39] Most literature begins by deducing the concept of civil society from the times of Aristotle and concludes with yet another working definition. Usually civil society is situated at the intersection of the private sphere and the state, but sometimes it is considered as something explicitly separate from them,[40] and sometimes it is thought to partially overlap the two spheres. For Pollack, and also for this study, civil society will be understood as the entire public sphere in which citizens voluntarily – i.e. irrespective of private

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[30]   Linz, Juan J. / Stepan, Alfred C.: Problems of democratic transition and consolidation. Southern Europe, South America, and post-communist Europe, Baltimore/MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996, here p. 5.

[31]   Held, David: Democracy and the Global Order. From the Modern State to Cosmopolitan Governance, Stanford/CA: Stanford University Press, 1995, here p. 158.

[32]   Gunther, Richard / Diamandouros, P. Nikiforos / Puhle, Hans-Jürgen: O'Donnell's 'Illusions'. A Rejoinder, in: Journal of Democracy, 1996 (Vol. 7), No. 4, pp. 151–159, here p. 155.

[33]   Croissant, Aurel / Lauth, Hans-Joachim / Merkel, Wolfgang: Zivilgesellschaft und Transformation. Ein internationaler Vergleich, in: Merkel, Wolfgang (ed.): Systemwechsel 5. Zivilgesellschaft und Transformation, Opladen: Leske & Budrich, 2000, pp. 9–49.

[34]   Fukuyamy, Francis: Trust. The Social Virtues and the Creation of Prosperit, New York/NY: Free Press, 1995, here p. 8.

[35]   Merkel, Wolfgang (ed.): Systemwechsel 5. Zivilgesellschaft und Transformation, Opladen: Leske & Budrich, 2000, here p. 7.

[36]   O'Donnell, Guillermo / Schmitter, Philippe / Whitehead, Laurence (eds): Transitions from Authoritarian Rule, Baltimore/MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986, here p. 3.

[37]   Lauth, Hans-Joachim / Merkel, Wolfgang: Zivilgesellschaft und Transformation. Ein Diskussionsbeitrag in revisionistischer Absicht, in: Forschungsjournal Neue Soziale Bewegungen, 1997 (Vol. 10), No. 1, pp. 12–34.

[38]   Chandler, David: Bosnia. Faking democracy after Dayton, London, Sterling/VA: Pluto Press, 1999, here p. 13.

[39]   Schmitter, Philippe C.: Some Propositions about Civil Society and the Consolidation of Democracy, in: Institut für Höhere Studien (ed.): Reihe Politikwissenschaft, Nr. 10, Wien: Institut für Höhere Studien, 1993, pp. 1–14, here p. 1.

[40]   Cohen, Jean L. / Arato, Andrew: Civil Society and Political Theory, Cambridge/MA: MIT Press, 1992, here p. 5; Hann, Chris / Dunn, Elizabeth (eds): Civil Society. Challenging Western Models, London: Routledge, 1996, here p. 4. Whether or not political associations are part of CS remains contested in the literature.

interests – come together in associations, movements, etc.[41] Civil society is thus separate from the state but not apolitical.[42]

As the appearance of civil society in transformation states changes rapidly, it makes more sense to analyse it as a non-normative[43] analytical category rather than as a distinct historical form. Croissant et al. identify five functions attributed to civil society in the literature: protection, intermediation, communication, socialization and community.[44] Civil society is assumed to facilitate the aggregation of interests and help citizens to influence policy;[45] it is also supposed to create 'intermediary groups'.[46] The quality of civil society is often measured by counting the number of existing NGOs and the share of population active in them. This criterion might provide some – but far from reliable – information about the state of civil society and democracy in a given country.[47]

All of these models assume civil society to be miraculously immune against the surrounding 'evils' of the society in which it is embedded. Thorny issues like corruption, clientelism/nepotism, nationalism, etc. are rarely included in civil society assessment. Some authors criticize this naïve view and add further (potential) 'dark sides' of civil society to the list, such as a low degree of legitimacy, frequent entrenchment in politics, the potential to undermine the development of the state (and thus possibly weaken it), 'projectitis'[48] (the practice of organizing projects with donor money in order to secure jobs and follow the 'trends' of calls for tenders issued each year), etc.

Chandler e.g. critically reflects on the possible positive and negative effects of civil society promotion: external funding runs the risk of fragmenting society rather than creating a pluralistic exchange of political opinions. NGOs relying on outside funding seem to have no need to engage in discussion or forge broader links to society. 'The financing of private bodies, as representatives of democracy and development, without a clear policy may in fact encourage the fragmentation of societies under political breakdown rather than encourage pluralism.'[49]

Paffenholz/Spurk additionally underline the necessity for a better understanding of the conditions and obstacles that affect civil society's ability to play a constructive role in post-conflict situations, including

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[41]   Pollack, Detlef: Zivilgesellschaft und Staat in der Demokratie, in: Forschungsjournal Neue Soziale Bewegungen, 2003 (Vol. 16), No. 2, pp. 46–75, here pp. 46-48.

[42]   Tenčić, Kristina: Faking Civil Society? Eine Analyse des Beitrags der Europäischen Union zur Entwicklung der kroatischen Zivilgesellschaft und deren realen Verfassung, Frankfurt (Oder): unpublished BA thesis, 2009.

[43]   Pollack, Detlef: Zivilgesellschaft und Staat in der Demokratie, in: Forschungsjournal Neue Soziale Bewegungen, 2003 (Vol. 16), No. 2, pp. 46–75.

[44]   Croissant, Aurel / Lauth, Hans-Joachim / Merkel, Wolfgang: Zivilgesellschaft und Transformation. Ein internationaler Vergleich, in: Merkel, Wolfgang (ed.): Systemwechsel 5. Zivilgesellschaft und Transformation, Opladen: Leske & Budrich, 2000, pp. 9–49.

[45]   Kligman, Gail: Reclaiming the Public. A Reflection on Recreating Civil Society in Romania, in: Eastern European Politics and Societies, 1990 (Vol. 4), No. 3, pp. 393–438, here p. 420.

[46]   Schmitter, Philippe C.: On Civil Society and the Consolidation of Democracy. Ten Propositions, Stanford/CA: Stanford Department of Political Science, 1995, here p. 1.

[47]   Vejvoda, Ivan / Kaldor, Mary: Democratization in Central and Eastern Europe, London: Continuum Press, 1997, here p. 77.

[48]   Seifija, Ismet: From the 'Civil Sector' to Civil Society? Progress and Prospects, in: Fischer, Martina (ed.): Peacebuilding and Civil Society in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Ten Years after Dayton, Berlin: LIT/Berghof Research Center for Constructive Conflict Management, 2006, pp. 125–140.

[49]   Chandler, David: Bosnia. Faking democracy after Dayton, London, Sterling/VA: Pluto Press, 1999, here p. 35.

the behaviour of potential or existing 'uncivil' society actors and the role of fragile or authoritarian states.[50]

3.2 Democracy promotion and ethnic fragmentation – the nation. All for one and one for all?

The construction of civil society is a lengthy process. Ethnic fragmentation seems even more difficult to deactivate and can very easily be (re-)mobilized as a catalyst for conflict.[51] Today almost 90% of the world's states are poly-ethnic – and half of them are divided along ethnic lines.[52] Ethnic fragmentation should thus be treated as a crucial factor when designing external democracy promotion programmes.[53]

Since 1989, the leaders of the FSC have been faced with the highly demanding task of choosing strategies and instruments for state- as well as nation-building.[54] The FSC have thus had to conceptualize a new institution-architecture, usually referred to as 'state-building'[55]. After gaining independence, they were also confronted with the daunting task of having to define themselves as a 'nation' and address questions about group belonging through a more or less consciously directed and contested process of 'nation-building'[56] (including the creation of a 'national identity' as a 'collective community of will'[57], etc.). Nation-building has proven especially difficult in the FSC, particularly because politics and the economy have been ethnicized by groups competing for their 'piece of the pie' during unsure transitional (political and financial) resource allocation. Also, following the break-up of the Warsaw Pact, politicians often came to power by playing the 'ethnic card'. This 'ethnicization' is still omnipresent.[58] It is quite likely owing to the fact that the Soviet concept of 'nation' was largely based on an ethnic definition

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[50]   Paffenholz, Thania / Spurk, Christoph: Civil Society, Civic Engagement, and Peacebuilding, in: Social Development Papers, Conflict Prevention & Reconstruction, 2006 (Vol. 1), No. 36, pp. 1–47, here p. 46.

[51]   Chandler, David: Bosnia. Faking democracy after Dayton, London, Sterling/VA: Pluto Press, 1999, here p. 46.

[52]   Giddens, Anthony: The Nation-State and Violence, Cambridge: Polity, 1985, here pp. 216–220.

[53]   E.g. Silander, Daniel: Democracy from the Outside-In? The Conceptualization and Significance of Democracy Promotion, Vaxjö: Vaxjö University Press, 2005.

[54]   More on processes of nation- and state-building see e.g. Hippler, Jochen (ed.): Nation-Buidling. Ein Schlüsselkonzept für friedliche Konfliktbearbeitung?, Bonn: Stiftung Entwicklung und Frieden, 2004.

[55]   'State-building is a key concept of successful nation-building. It presupposes a number of practical abilities (a financial bases for a functioning state-apparatus, an organized police and judicial system, an administrative system that is effective and accepted in the entire state, loyal personell, that identifies with the "nation" – and the state must be able to exert its monopoly on the use of force on the whole state territory.' Hippler, Jochen: Nation-Building the Globalisation Process-A contribution to regional stability and global security, Conference Paper SEF-Symposium 2002 (Development and Peace Foundation) University Club Bonn 11-12 December 2002, 2002, http://www jochen-hippler de/neu/pdf-Dokumente/NB%20Paper.pdf, accessed 3 July 2008, here p. 19.

[56]   Dave defines 'nation-building' as 'the measures taken by the state to unify and homogenize its diverse population under a commonly shared civic identity that prevails over ethnic, linguistic, religious or regional markers.' Dave, Bhavna: A Shrinking State? Language Policy and Implementation in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, in: Jones Luong, Pauline (ed.): The Transformation of Central Asia. States and Societies from Soviet Rule to Independence, Ithaca/NY, London: Cornell University Press, 2004, pp. 120–155, here p. 123.

[57]   Hopp, Ulrike / Kloke-Lesch, Adolf: Nation-Building versus Nationenbildung. Eine entwicklungspolitische Perspektive, in: Hippler, Jochen (ed.): Nation-Buidling. Ein Schlüsselkonzept für friedliche Konfliktbearbeitung?, Bonn: Stiftung Entwicklung und Frieden, 2004, pp. 195–213, here p. 197.

[58]   Hornstein-Tomić, Caroline: Interethnische Beziehungen in Südosteuropa. Ein Bericht zur Lage in Bosnien-Herzegowina, Kosovo, Kroatien, Mazedonien, Montenegro, und Serbien, 2008, http://www.kas.de/wf/doc/kas_13999-544-1-30.pdf, accessed 29 April 2009, here pp. 2–3.

of group belonging. Ethnicity was a predominant category in the Soviet region as well as in the former Yugoslavia.[59]

Many renowned authors consider state-building the top priority. They regard it as a necessary precondition for further nation-building processes as a second step.[60] For others, the priority is clearly the reverse: Hopp/Kloke-Lesch contend that state-building represents only two of three necessary steps on the way to completing the nation-building process. In their view, nation-building consists of three closely related constituent parts: 1) the development of a functioning and by civil-society-accepted state; 2) a physical, social, and media infrastructure shared by the entire civil society. The first two are essential for what is called 'state-building', whereas in order to achieve 'nation-building' one additional component is required, which is 3) a socio-cultural process of creation and integration that leads to shared attributes of identity, values and goals. What is relevant in this regard is not the homogeneity of society with regard to these questions but the acceptance of the heterogeneity of answers and the facilitation of inclusion of diverse citizens.[61]

Regarding external democracy promotion, when it comes to state-building measures, the (often financial) support is sometimes reluctantly but more often openly welcome concerning the (re-) building of state institutions. With respect to nation-building, however, the right to self-determination is often emphasized by the FSC and international organizations alike. Interference by external actors into this field is much more emphatically rejected. Thus, the difficult mission of nation-building, a process that is especially crucial in countries with ethnic divisions, is often left to the countries' politicians.

4. Proceedings of the study

This paper asks the following **main question**:

How does the choice of strategy regarding the promotion of state- vs. nation-building in external democracy promotion influence the degree of democratic functioning of civil society?

The **variables** examined are:

I. *Explaining/independent variable: the choice of strategy regarding the promotion of state- vs. nation-building in external democracy promotion;*

II. *Explained/dependent variable: the degree of democratic functioning of civil society in ethnically fragmented societies.*

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[59]   Halbach, Uwe: Das sowjetische Vielvölkerimperium. Nationalitätenpolitik und nationale Frage, Mannheim: BI-Taschenbuch, 1992, here pp. 34–36.

[60]   E.g. Fukuyama, Francis: 'Stateness' First, in: Journal of Democracy, 2005 (Vol. 16), No. 1, pp. 84–88.

[61]   Hopp, Ulrike / Kloke-Lesch, Adolf: Nation-Building versus Nationenbildung. Eine entwicklungspolitische Perspektive, in: Hippler, Jochen (ed.): Nation-Buidling. Ein Schlüsselkonzept für friedliche Konfliktbearbeitung?, Bonn: Stiftung Entwicklung und Frieden, 2004, pp. 195–213, here p. 197.

The following **hypothesis** will be tested:

The less external democracy promotion insists on non-ethnically defined nation-building, the fewer resources for promotion of civil society will be applied to overcome ethnic fragmentation, thus lessening the possible effects of democratization.

5. External democracy promotion of civil society revisited. Operationalization and methodological approach

This study does not intend to isolate clearly quantifiable causations of something as complex as a political system and its inhabitants' attitudes. So the method of choice is a qualitative comparative case study. As the study does not aim at generating quantifiable data, the number of n (=cases) is small, but should provide in-depth information about the perceptions and context of the field under research.[62]

The goal is to investigate, in an explorative manner, how actors involved at different levels of civil society democracy promotion *perceive* the choice of strategies with respect to state- vs. nation-building by international actors. I assume that actors in different positions have different insights into the state-/nation-building strategies that have been/are being applied in their countries. In order to limit my field of investigation, I will concentrate on programmes of the European Union (as the largest democracy promoter by budget and number of programmes), German political funds (which have a special focus on civil society promotion) and the OSCE (an important promoter of bottom-up democracy promotion through civil society development).

5.1 Case selection

The research design of this study was inspired by the method M. Steven Fish applies in his book 'Democracy Derailed in Russia'[63]. Whereas Fish starts by screening all countries of the world in order to identify variables for his post-socialist case, Russia, I take his study and some others (e.g. by Marc Howard[64], Alina Mungiu-Pippidi[65]) as sufficient arguments to concentrate my research on the FSC instead of starting with a global investigation.

I wish to select two cases and examine them to determine the current strategies of the EU, German political funds and the OSCE. The criteria for the two cases will be that they both display high levels of ethnic fragmentation but different degrees of success in terms of their democratization; I also want to investigate how actors at different levels perceive the organizations' choice of strategy with respect to its incorporation of ethnic fragmentation as a factor. Owing to a lack of space in this paper, I exclude the investigation of further intervening factors vis-à-vis the democratization process and leave this for my Ph.D. dissertation.

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[62]   Schneckener and Wolff also propose qualitative case studies for research on ethnic conflicts and their dynamics, cf. Schneckener, Ulrich / Wolff, Stefan (eds): Managing and Settling Ethnic Conflicts Perspectives on Success and Failure in Europe, Asia, and Africa, London: Hurst, 2004, here p. viii.

[63]   Fish, M. Steven: Democracy Derailed in Russia. The Failure of Open Politics in Russia, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

[64]   Howard, Marc Morjé: The Weakness of Civil Society in Post-Communist Europe, Cambridge et al.: Cambridge University Press, 2003.

[65]   E.g. Mungiu-Pippidi, Alina: Democratization without Decommunization in the Balkans, in: ORBIS, 2006 (Vol. 50), No. 4, pp. 641–655.

Ethnic fragmentation is represented by the ratio of the first and second biggest ethnic groups, based on the assumption that the ethnicized nation-building processes in the FSC make it more difficult for the ruling elites to establish state-wide alignment when there is a strong second biggest ethnic group competing for resources and power and possibly threatening to defect.[66]

Democratization is measured by showing a country's so-called 'real' degree of progress in the process by subtracting its Freedom House Democracy Score 1999/2000 from its 2008 score, both of which are measured on a scale of 1 (best) to 7 (worst).[67]

Due to a lack of data ratings for Serbia before 2003, the data for Yugoslavia have been substituted, which might provide roughly reliable information about the status of the later independent countries. Data for Montenegro and Kosovo are difficult to find and too minimal to guarantee a reliable basis for correlations, so both countries are excluded from the study. Both were relatively small parts of Yugoslavia, which means that the representativeness of their data is doubtful in any case.

Fig. 1 illustrates how the FSC can be classified along a two-dimensional matrix of:

a) Ethnic fragmentation (Percentage of Second Biggest Ethnic Group of Population Total)

b) Democratization score (Freedom House Democracy Scores 1999–2008)
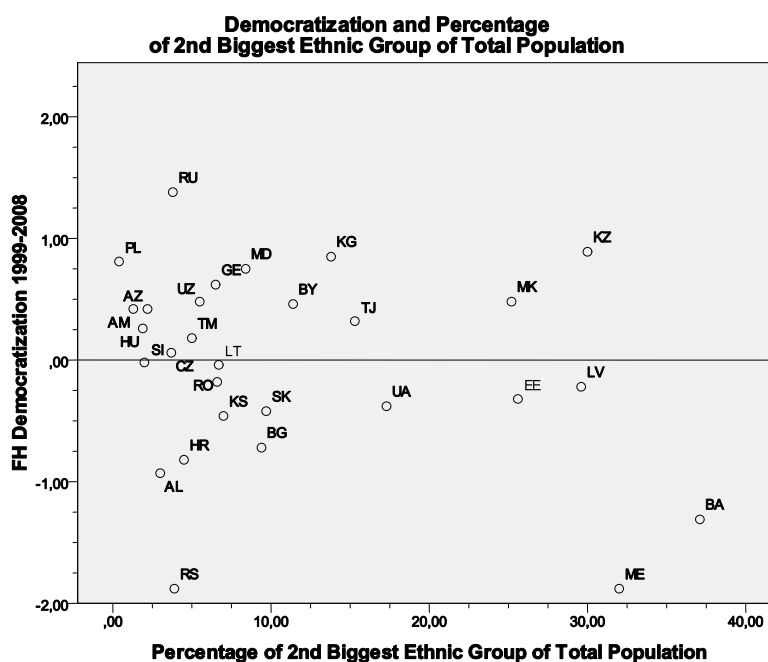
Sources: CIA World Fact Book, Freedom House

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[66] This is based on the assumption that a large second ethnic group will consider the chances for their success higher by bringing forward competing claims, resulting in more frequent, more insistent requests. According to Laitin, groups have four options for dealing with their minority status vis-à-vis the majority: loyalty, exit, voice and arms. See Laitin, David D.: Identity in Formation. The Russian Speaking Populations in the Near Abroad, Ithaca/NY: Cornell University Press, 1998, here p. 158.

[67] See Freedom House: Nations in Transit. Democracy Score Year-To-Year Summaries by Region 2008, 2008, http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=437&year=2008, accessed 3 May 2009.

On the right-hand side of the x-axis we can see a group of countries that all have a large second biggest ethnic group, but score differently on democratization: Macedonia, Estonia, Latvia, Kazakhstan, Montenegro and Bosnia-Herzegovina. As said above, there is not enough data available on Montenegro. Regarding my interest in programmes funded by the EU, OSCE and German political funds, the countries of Latvia and Estonia are already members of the EU and thus no longer targets of the programmes under study. But Kazakhstan (KZ), Bosnia-Herzegovina (BA) and Macedonia (MK) are interesting cases. In order to have additional selection criteria, I checked the Freedom House classification for regime type: Kazakhstan, with a score of 6.39, is rated as a consolidated authoritarian regime according to Freedom House's range of 6.00 to 7.00; Macedonia qualifies as a semi-consolidated democracy with a high score of 3.86 (range: 3.00 to 3.99); and Bosnia-Herzegovina, with a score of 4.11, falls under the category of transitional governments or hybrid regimes (range: 4.00 to 4.99).[68]

As noted above, my special interest lies in the question of why some countries seem to advance towards democracy while others seem to 'get stuck' along the way. Kazakhstan, as a consolidated authoritarian regime, is so far from democratization that it might not yield much insight into the process. However, the other two cases, Macedonia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, fall between consolidating democracies and hybrid regimes, and thus will very likely provide more information about the dynamics involved for countries that find themselves between the extreme poles of authoritarianism and democracy. This is the final argument for choosing Macedonia and Bosnia-Herzegovina as case studies. Macedonia's real democratization for the period 1999–2008 was +0.48 while Bosnia-Herzegovina's was -1.31.[69] The ratio of the first and second biggest ethnic groups is 64.20%/25.20% and 48.00%/37.10%[70], respectively.[71]

5.2 Process tracing – review of existing programmes and instruments

In order to better prepare and analyse the later interviews regarding the two selected cases, Macedonia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, I will need to collect information. To this end, I will examine the civil society promotion of the European Union, OSCE and German political funds ('Politische Stiftungen'), their goals, programmes, instruments, and if available, evaluations.[72]

5.3 Qualitative interviews – new insights on old questions

Assuming that actors in the field possess particular knowledge, I will ask them to assess how the various international actors' choice of strategy with respect to emphasizing either state- and/or nation-building has influenced (or is expected to influence) the process of democratic consolidation. Depending on their feedback, it might prove interesting to investigate how the actors feel about the civil society promotion strategy in their countries. For example, in Macedonia, the promotion has centred on integrating the

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[68] Freedom House: Nations in Transit. Democracy Score 2008 Rankings by Regime Type, 2008, http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=438&year=2008, accessed 3 May 2009.

[69] Freedom House: Nations in Transit. Democracy Score Year-To-Year Summaries by Region 2008, 2008, http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=437&year=2008, accessed 3 May 2009.

[70] The latter number is based on an estimation from the year 2000; new numbers from the EU suggest a more realistic 31%. See Hornstein-Tomić, Caroline: Interethnische Beziehungen in Südosteuropa. Ein Bericht zur Lage in Bosnien-Herzegowina, Kosovo, Kroatien, Mazedonien, Montenegro, und Serbien, 2008, http://www.kas.de/wf/doc/kas_13999-544-1-30.pdf, accessed 29 April 2009, here p. 6.

[71] CIA: World Fact Book, 2008, https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook, accessed 2 May 2009.

[72] For more on process tracing see Checkel, Jeffrey T.: It's the Process Stupid! Process Tracing in the Study of European and International Politics, 2005, http://www.arena.uio.no/publications/working-papers2005/papers/wp05_26.pdf, accessed 2 May 2009; and George, Alexander / Bennett, Andrew: Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences, Cambridge/MA, London: MIT Press, 2004.

large Albanian population, while in Bosnia-Herzegovina the goals of achieving ethnic representation and de facto non-sovereign status are more pressing issues.

I will conduct sixteen problem-centred and name-generator interviews. They will all be unstructured and guideline-based. My aim is to uncover new perspectives and assessments by giving the interviewees as much freedom to roam as possible.

	MK	BA
NGO activists	4	4
Personnel from EU/OSCE/GPF	4	4

The selection of the interviewees needs to be representative in a qualitative rather than in a quantitative sense. For now the criteria known to me could roughly provide relevant categories, but I do not yet think I am sufficiently informed about the relevant categories for representativeness in the field. I therefore prefer to follow the methodology used by Kelle and Kluge, i.e. I will determine the final categories once I have conducted more interviews in the field.[73]

6. Formal and informal rules of the game? Possible implications

Even though the study has not been completed, what do the findings suggest so far? The intention of this study was to contribute to a better understanding of the influence the choice of strategy between state- vs. nation-building in external democracy promotion has on the degree of democratic functioning of civil society in ethnically fragmented societies. The results of the 'research in progress' (including the first preliminary interviews) suggest that the democracy promotion debate frequently fails to integrate existing knowledge from peace and conflict research about the ethnic fragmentation of societies, including the respective civil society, into theories of democratization.

Even though external democracy promoters usually obey the credo of 'do no harm', a meticulous analysis of the societal situation (including ethnic parameters) prior to intervention rarely happens according to numerous authors.[74]

It looks as though the international community has followed largely different strategies, followed by different outcomes, when dealing with the conflicts in Macedonia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. In Macedonia, for example, the EU co-signed the Ohrid Agreement in 2000 (as a basis for restructuring the state) and promised a clear prospect for accession; both efforts seem to have prevented further escalation of the ethnic conflict there. The Macedonian state acknowledged that all groups not belonging to the eth-

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[73]   Kelle, Udo / Kluge, Susann: Vom Einzelfall zum Typus. Fallvergleich und Fallkontrastierung in der qualitativen Sozialforschung, Opladen: Leske & Budrich, 1999, here pp. 99–100.

[74]   Hippler, Jochen: Nation-states for Export? Nation-building between military intervention, crisis prevention and development policy, in: Hippler, Jochen (ed.): Nation-Building. A Key Concept for Peaceful Conflict Transformation?, London: Pluto Press, 2005, pp. 173-190. See also http://www.jochen-hippler.de/Aufsatze/aufsatze.html, last accessed 7 November 2007, here p. 174, also Grävingholt, Jörn / Leininger, Julia / Schlumberger, Oliver: Demokratieförderung. Quo vadis?, in: APuZ, 2009, No. 8, pp. 28–33.

nic majority group had a constitutive character.[75] In contrast, intervention came very late to Bosnia-Herzegovina, and even today ethnicity continues to be the all-determining category for representation and is cemented into the political design. Strategic choices do apparently have consequences.

Alina Mungiu-Pippidi writes that in many cases ethnic clientelistic networks still dominate all sectors of society.[76] Ethnicity continues to be an ever-present topic among civil society activists, as well; negative ethnic categories are frequently reproduced and transmitted.[77] She hints that

> [I]n order to have democracy, one must first have a state, which requires agreement on who makes up the political community and where boundaries should be drawn. For a polity to democratize, **it must first be acknowledged as one by its entire population** and granted the same recognition by the international powers. To meet these two conditions simultaneously has proven exceedingly rare in Southeast Europe. (Emphasis mine – FB.)

The most successful states with respect to democratization are either ethnically homogenous (e.g. Poland and Hungary) or have succeeded in establishing equality and peaceful relations among their ethnic groups, including equal representation in the national political community (e.g. Slovenia and Romania). Countries that have failed to achieve parity and mutual understanding among their ethnic groups have been relatively less successful with democratization (e.g. Macedonia).[78]

Regarding the stagnation of democratization at a 'hybrid' level, the future remains uncertain. The impact of the economic crisis in 2008 can be felt in the FSC in terms of the changing and decreasing investment priorities of Western states. However, the prospect of EU accession[79] (closer in reach for some, e.g. Macedonia and Croatia, than for others, e.g. Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia – not to mention the countries with no prospects for accession) might provide new impetus. Or perhaps the changing generations, despite the brain drain in some countries, will bring gradual but definite change: young people travel, study/work abroad or see different perspectives in the media (even though they are also immersed in the historical heritage of their own countries).

Although the results of the study might not be statistically robust at this point, they nonetheless strongly indicate that decontextualized democracy promotion and insistence on the installation of the characteristics of Western democracies often only leads to 'democratic façades'.[80] External democracy promotion today has a worldwide annual budget of about 10 billion euros[81] and sometimes is pejoratively called the

[75] Hornstein-Tomić, Caroline: Interethnische Beziehungen in Südosteuropa. Ein Bericht zur Lage in Bosnien-Herzegowina, Kosovo, Kroatien, Mazedonien, Montenegro, und Serbien, 2008, http://www.kas.de/wf/doc/kas_13999-544-1-30.pdf, accessed 29 April 2009, here p. 45, 47.

[76] Mungiu-Pippidi, Alina: Democratization without Decommunization in the Balkans, in: ORBIS, 2006 (Vol. 50), No. 4, pp. 641–655.

[77] Hornstein-Tomić, Caroline: Interethnische Beziehungen in Südosteuropa. Ein Bericht zur Lage in Bosnien-Herzegowina, Kosovo, Kroatien, Mazedonien, Montenegro, und Serbien, 2008, http://www.kas.de/wf/doc/kas_13999-544-1-30.pdf, accessed 29 April 2009, here p. 45.

[78] Mungiu-Pippidi, Alina: Democratization without Decommunization in the Balkans, in: ORBIS, 2006 (Vol. 50), No. 4, pp. 641–655, here pp. 6-7.

[79] Hornstein-Tomić, Caroline: Interethnische Beziehungen in Südosteuropa. Ein Bericht zur Lage in Bosnien-Herzegowina, Kosovo, Kroatien, Mazedonien, Montenegro, und Serbien, 2008, http://www.kas.de/wf/doc/kas_13999-544-1-30.pdf, accessed 29 April 2009, here pp. 82–83.

[80] Grävingholt, Jörn / Leininger, Julia / Schlumberger, Oliver: Demokratieförderung. Quo vadis?, in: APuZ, 2009, No. 8, pp. 28–33, here p. 30.

[81] Ibid., p. 28.

'boom-industry' of international cooperation.[82] In fact, the real effectiveness of democracy promotion up to date has not been scientifically proven; only the effects of EU accession seem to be clearly detectable.[83] This might have different reasons: either changes in value, as said above, take years or decades, or for some reason the strategies do not have the intended effect – or various actors do not mind the *status quo*. Or, in some cases, ethnic fragmentation is not as grave as often stated, but nonetheless competes for external support. Well-functioning economic cooperation across ethnic divisions might be an indicator for the latter.[84]

Concluding from the literature and first explorative interviews, the two most likely answers to the research question are: 1) State-building is often given priority and necessary nation-building is neglected; and 2) either a) all actors are aware of the ethnic divide, but need to spend (donors)/receive (NGOs) democratization resources, so they ignore the existing ethnicized bias, or b) the ethnic divide is not as threatening as often stated, but different actors exploit the issue so that outsiders will continue to provide resources.

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[82] Schraeder, Peter J. (ed.): Exporting Democracy. Rhetoric vs. Reality, London: Lynne Rienner, 2000, cited in Grävingholt, Jörn / Leininger, Julia / Schlumberger, Oliver: Demokratieförderung. Quo vadis?, in: APuZ, 2009, No. 8, pp. 28–33, here p. 28.

[83] Grävingholt, Jörn / Leininger, Julia / Schlumberger, Oliver: Demokratieförderung. Quo vadis?, in: APuZ, 2009, No. 8, pp. 28–33, here p. 28; Schimmelfennig, Frank / Scholtz, Hanno: EU Democracy Promotion in the European Neighbourhood. Political Conditionality, Economic Development and Transnational Exchange, in: European Union Politics, 2008 (Vol. 9), No. 2, pp. 187–215.

[84] Hornstein-Tomić, Caroline: Interethnische Beziehungen in Südosteuropa. Ein Bericht zur Lage in Bosnien-Herzegowina, Kosovo, Kroatien, Mazedonien, Montenegro, und Serbien, 2008, http://www.kas.de/wf/doc/kas_13999-544-1-30.pdf, accessed 29 April 2009, here p. 8.